

HARDROCK 100 MOUNTAIN RUN

CLOCKWISE COURSE DESCRIPTION 2016

Miles
Elevation

[0.0] 9310	SILVERTON. Start in front of Silverton High School Gym on 12 th Street. Head (NW) on 12 th Street, the northeast side of the high school. Go NW to Snowden Street, turn left, (SW), go two blocks to 10 th Street, turn right (NW) and go up hill. When 10 th street ends, continue straight ahead on a trail that climbs toward the Shrine of the Mines statue. Turn left on the Shrine Road (SE) and follow it 0.5 miles, almost to the intersection of the Shrine Road with Highway 550.
[0.8] 9301	Nute Chute. About 30 yards before reaching Highway 550, turn right (WNW) and follow jeep road under the electric power lines. You are going to parallel the highway, staying to the right and above it as you go up canyon in the Mineral Creek Drainage. The road merges across a red talus slope. You pass high above the log building that at one time was the Columbine Hotel and the white, green and silver metal buildings next to the highway. After coming off the talus slope, you are on a broad, almost level trail through the aspens. The route you are following is the railroad bed that carried trains from Silverton to Ironton. About 0.6 miles beyond the old Columbine Hotel, when you are directly across from the Silverton Bear Creek, leave the railroad bed on a trail to your left. The trail drops under the power line near a two-poled power line support, and descends on a sloped bench to Highway 550. Silverton Bear Creek, the next leg of the run, is the large canyon you will be looking up across Mineral Creek. When you reach the highway, turn left (ESE) and go downstream about 50 yards. (The Nute Chute is named in honor of Silverton runner Chris Nute who suggested this route to eliminate the need to run on Highway 550.)
[2.0] 9395	Mineral Creek. (The route described below from Highway 550 to the Ice Lake trail is only partially shown on the Silverton Quadrangle USGS map.) When you are even with the confluence of the Silverton Bear Creek and Mineral Creek, leave the highway turning right (SSW), go steeply about 30 feet down to the water's edge, then work your way upstream for about 50 yards to the fixed rope anchor. Wade the knee-to-waist deep Mineral Creek using the fixed rope for assistance. Climb the short steep bank up the south side of Mineral Creek, then angle right, upstream (WNW) until you get into an open area that has several large fence posts in it. Keeping the fence posts to your right, turn directly toward (SSW) Bear Creek Canyon and pick up the obvious old mining trail paralleling the north side of the Bear Creek Stream.
[2.3] 9490	Trail makes a hard right turn (WNW) and climbs steeply for 0.3mi, then levels as it gradually turns back (SW) into the Bear Creek drainage. Follow the mining trail (WSW) high on the right (NE) side of Bear Creek between Sultan Mountain and Bear Mountain. As you climb, there are some impressive rock glaciers to be observed on Sultan Mountain across the valley to your left.
[5.3] 11200	Pass through a tangle of willows, then drop slightly and enter a spruce-fir stand of trees on a steep, wet hillside that has a series of benches paralleling the stream. Continue (WSW) on one of these benches for about 0.25mi., maintaining an elevation of about 11,100'. You may encounter snowfields through here. When you reach a good-sized stream coming out of Putnam Basin to the right (W), turn right, (W) keeping the Putnam Basin stream to your left. Climb steeply following the combination of elk trails and sections of the original built mining trail to the Putnam Basin Trail.
[5.8] 11400	Putnam Basin Trail. Maintained by the shepherders, this good trail stays to the right (N) of the stream as it climbs first west then WSW up the basin. (The trail is not on the Trails Illustrated map, the USGS Silverton Quadrangle map or in the Colorado Atlas and Gazetteer.) About 0.75 miles up this trail, watch carefully for the trail fork where you go to the right on the less distinct trail, climbing quickly toward the cliffs. The better-looking left fork comes to a dead end at an abandoned mine/mill. Your trail climbs rapidly as it threads its way through the willows, crosses several steep gullies which may be snow-filled, and then works its way above the cliffs. Acrophobia, Exposure. The ruins of the mill are at the base of the cliff below you. As you climb into upper Putnam Basin, the trail levels and the direction swings from (WSW) to almost straight south. From where the trail ends, cross the Putnam Basin stream on a wide bench at the top of the cliff band and pick up one of the sheep trails that takes you directly toward the saddle (S) between Putnam Basin and Lime Creek.
[7.0] 12400	Putnam-Lime Creek Saddle. As you top this saddle you are looking south into Lime Creek. Highway 550 between Silverton and Durango is readily visible. Turn right (WNW) and climb directly up the Putnam-Lime ridge about 0.3 miles (elevation 12,600; top of the 1st climb), then pick one of the sheep trails to your left and contour around the left (SW) side of the ridge. Continue around the mountain, gradually losing altitude until you are directly above the Cataract-Lime Creek saddle, below you on the left. Turn left (W) and descend steeply into the grassy area near the Cataract-Lime Creek saddle. On your right is the spectacular looking horseshoe-shaped chasm of Cataract Gulch.
[7.8] 12110	The route from the Cataract-Lime Creek saddle makes a large arc across upper Cataract Gulch. Your target is the saddle between Cataract and Porcupine Creeks. There are numerous trails across here, including a built mine trail and numerous sheep trails. Exactly how you cross upper Cataract Gulch is dependent on the snow conditions. Stay in the meadow about 200 yards above the cliffs that drop off into Cataract Gulch going from a (W) to (NW) direction. Like the crossing across the major portion of upper Cataract, the final climb to the Cataract-Porcupine saddle is snow dependent. In a dry year, head for the switchback you see in the trail below the saddle, and then take a hard left (SW) and climb to the saddle. In a snowy year, pick a route directly to the saddle, usually on very hard, steep snow.

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[8.6] 12230	Cataract-Porcupine Saddle. Turn right (NNW) off the trail and go cross country as you descend steeply for 200 to 300 yards, then contour around the hillside still descending the Porcupine Creek drainage through a series of willows and bogs. The shepherd's trail through here is intermittent, but with care can be followed (W). You want to make sure you are on this trail get through the headwall. Follow the trail across a grassy slope until you reach a large fallen tree. The shepherd's trail goes straight. Turn left (SSW) off the trail and descends cross-country to the stream.
[9.4] 11240	Porcupine Creek. Cross Porcupine Creek and pick up a good trail that takes you due west across several tributaries of Porcupine Creek. You don't have much of a net altitude change across here even though you are going up and down and in and out of stream crossing. After crossing the last tributary, you are on a swampy bench with some huge conglomerate rocks to your left. The trail climbs sharply (W) to the 11600 foot level below the northeast ridge of Twin Sisters, crosses the ridge then swings (SSW) under the northeast peak of the Twin Sisters while experiencing very little elevation change.
[10.3] 11360	Near the west ridge of the northeast Twin Sister Peak, you will cross next to an active rock glacier. The grass on the hillside is visibly being displaced by the moving rock. This is a great place to take a break and marvel at one of nature's mountain eroding activities in action. Just past the rock glacier, the trail turns abruptly right (NW) and descends rapidly on a series of switchbacks into the South Fork of Mineral Creek. Once into the meadow at the bottom, continue to angle right (WNW) across the meadow on a muddy track. The abandoned buildings across Mineral Creek to your left are the remains of facilities at the Bandora Mine. Your goal is to get onto FS Road 585 about a quarter mile down canyon from the Bandora.
[11.1] 10600	South Fork of Mineral Creek. (Elev. 10600) Wade the stream, (depending on the water level there may be a fixed rope) and work your way directly up the grassy hillside on the west side of the stream to the Bandora Jeep Road (Elev. 10690). KT AID STATION. Turn right (N) on FS Road 585 and go 0.3mi.
[11.5] 10640	Turn left (NNE) on the abandoned mine road and cross the face of the mountain. From here to the Ice Lake Trail is the Kamm Traverse, named in honor of Ulrich Kamm, who suggested using this route after the 1993 run based on some old maps. Since then, Hardrock has essentially followed his suggested course. At the caved in mine, the road ends and the path narrows to a game trail that crosses the end of the ridge directly west of the South Mineral Campground and about 1200 feet above it. Exposure, Acrophobia. A mixture of columbine, various colors of paintbrush, green gentian, and multiple kinds of yellow and blue flowers abound across this slope giving you a wonderful flower show.
[12.0] 11000	Enter the trees, and follow the trail to the left (WNW) on a bench. Pass to the right of some large conglomerate rocks and ponds and continue straight across a small meadow where the bench you have been following drops to your right toward the stream. Once into the trees, follow the trail through a series of bogs maintaining altitude until you meet the Lower Ice Lake Basin stream. In this short stretch of stream, the canyon bottom is a relatively flat bowl with a small waterfall at the upper end and a series of piled up trees at the lower. Carefully pick a way across the stream, either by wading or walking on the pile of trees. Note: in 2005 this valley was filled with hard snow from a snow slide and a fixed rope had to be installed above the waterfall to provide a stable crossing.
[12.8] 10980	Ice Lake Basin Creek. Once across the stream, pick up the steep trail that is near the bottom end of the bowl you just crossed and climb very steeply up hill just to the right of a small ridge. In about 0.1mi, you will meet the very well maintained Ice Lake Trail.
[13.0] 11200	New Ice Lake Trail. FS 505. Turn left (WNW) going up hill on this heavily used trail. The trail passes to the left of a huge conglomerate boulder, then switches back sharply (SW) and crosses the ridge back into the Ice Lake drainage. After crossing the ridge, the trail direction becomes northwesterly. As you come out of the trees, you are in lower Ice Lake Basin, a huge alpine meadow. Several of the switchbacks on the original Island Lake trail, your route, can be seen above the cliff band directly in front of you. Just before the Ice Lake trail crosses the first small drainage, leave the New Ice Lake trail.
[13.2] 11400	Original Island Lake Trail. Angle right (NNE) and stay on right side of the small, usually dry, drainage. The first 100 yards may be difficult to find depending on vegetation, but you soon get on the well-built trail that switches back and forth up the slope in a generally (NW) direction. This is the original route shown on the 1890's map for Island and Ice Lakes. After crossing the mountain face and going about 400 vertical feet above the Ice Lake Trail, the trail moves into a side valley and follows a small stream. Stay to the left side of the mine dump with rail on it and pick up a trail and continue up the stream. This trail continues (WNW) across a flat area with several ponds then disappears. Continue straight ahead (WNW) and climb a small ridge until you can see Island Lake. Expect snow through here.
[14.3] 12400	Island Lake. With the lake on your left, you will be looking at the head of Ice Lake Basin below U.S. Grant Peak. Your goal is Grant-Swamp Pass, the saddle directly north of Island Lake and directly east of U.S. Grant Peak. Following some faint animal trails across the head of the basin, climb steeply as you head directly toward U.S. Grant Peak (WNW). Snow conditions in here have been highly variable during previous Hardrock runs.
[14.2] 12800	About 200 yards below the ridge, elevation ~12800, after you have passed under Grant-Swamp Pass, switchback right (ENE) and climb toward the saddle. The Joel Zucker Memorial Plaque is attached to the rocks in the saddle. Pass to the left of the memorial and work your way along the top of the ridge until you get to the cut on the right (E) side of Grant Swamp Pass.

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[14.8] 12920	Elev. 12920. Grant Swamp Pass. <u>Pass # 2</u> . Acrophobia, Exposure. Take a deep breath and look over the top of the pass into Swamp Canyon. In front of you (N) across the mouth of Swamp Canyon is a red colored ridge with a road switchbacking up it. That is your next climb - Oscar's Pass. Having recovered your breath, move closer to the edge of the snow field extending into upper Swamp Canyon and look down it. IF SNOW CONDITIONS WARRANT, THERE WILL BE A FIXED ROPE HERE. Start down the snow (N). If the snow is soft enough to give you control as you slide, glissade down it. If the snow is hard, work your way to the right into the scree. This small rock and dirt mixture will slide with you and can be great fun going down. Head for the grassy ridge between the two drainages of upper Swamp Canyon. The most consistent footing is along the top of the ridge, where you occasionally encounter remains of the trail. Snow in the gullies either side of the ridge may entice you to glissade down it. This is fine. Just remember to keep the main drainage of Swamp Canyon to your right as you work your way down. Remains of mining trails are sporadic in this area so you will be on trail for short sections then scrambling over rock. Be careful, these rocks can be leg breakers. After dropping some 800-900 vertical feet, you will see a very wide, grassy or snow covered bench to your left. Either follow the trail or go pick a route across the snow to the bench.
[15.7] 11800	Once on the bench, angle left (NNW) and follow it around the head of Swamp Canyon and under the north face of U.S. Grant Peak. There are two lovely waterfalls to your left as you cross this bench. After crossing the stream below the second waterfall, get on the obvious trail and continue down the left wall of the canyon. The trail swings from a (NNW) to (NW) direction as it crosses a large slide rock field. You will be traveling parallel to (N) and about 700 vertical feet above the Swamp Canyon drainage. After crossing a small stream coming in from the left, go to the left of the big downed tree. Continue north, pass the remains of a sheep herder's camp (stove) and continue through the spruce/fir stand. Cut wooden posts mark the route through the trees and skunk cabbage, then you meet an excellent trail. The trail crosses several high meadows as you continue for about 0.75 miles down canyon (NNE) before switching back and forth several times through the trees as it drops steeply toward (E) the Swamp Canyon Stream.
[17.3] 10600	Swamp Canyon Road. When you meet the one time jeep road (now closed to vehicles), turn left down canyon and follow the road to the Howard Fork of the San Miguel River. Cross the river (in recent years there has been a log bridge here) and climb up a short hill (50 ft) to the Chapman Gulch Aid Station.
[18.1] 10190	CHAPMAN GULCH AID STATION-CREW ACCESS-BAG DROP. When you leave the aid station, turn left (WNW) at the road "T". Follow the road gradually downhill. The road has eroded badly and the stream coming from your right out of Chapman Gulch has taken over various parts of the road.
[18.5] 10160	Ophir Pass Road, FR 679. You meet the Ophir Pass Road at the location of the long abandoned town of Iron Springs. The town was named for the red colored minerals covering the ground in this area. Turn right (E) and go uphill to the second road on your left. This is a heavily traveled jeep road so watch for traffic.
[18.9] 10480	Turn left (NNE) onto Oscar's Pass Jeep Road. At about 11,800' make a hard right at the "T" intersection and around the locked pipe gate. Essentially all the signs on the gate say that people on foot are allowed so continue. The road switches back and forth across the hillside going generally (N) on the left (W) side of Chapman Gulch. The upper part of this road is not on the Trails Illustrated or USGS maps. A snowfield left by a resident snow slide usually is present across the road at the final switchbacks. Exposure. During the middle part of the day the snow may be soft enough that you can kick steps into it, but most of the time it is rock hard. STEPS WILL BE CUT INTO THE SNOW DURING MARKING.
[21.3] 13140	Oscar's Pass- <u>Pass #3</u> . Acrophobia, Exposure, Cornice. From the top of the pass you will be looking N into Bridal Veil Basin. To your left is an unnamed peak (13,432' on maps). Just beyond the peak on its north ridge is the Wasatch saddle, the low point between Wasatch Peak and Peak 13,342. The traverse from Oscars Pass to the Wasatch Saddle will most likely be on snow. Expect a cornice on the Bridal Veil side of the pass. THERE WILL BE STEPS CUT ACROSS THE CORNICE AND ICE FACE. An ice axe or crampons may be a great comfort here. Stay on Oscar's Pass Road as it continues into the upper end of Bridal Veil Basin, traversing (NNW) under Peak 13,342 toward the Wasatch Saddle. Keep an eye on the saddle and when slope and snow allow it, turn left (NW) off the road and climb up to the saddle. If you reach the forest service sign in Bridal Veil Basin with a trail marker indicating the Bear Creek Trail, you have gone too far. Make an immediate left turn and climb to Wasatch Saddle. There is also a wooden FS signpost directly on top of the Wasatch Saddle- signs vary year to year.
[21.7] 13060	Wasatch Saddle. FS 508. Cross the saddle and get on the Wasatch Trail. The trail improves dramatically as you descend into Wasatch Basin and the beginning of the East Fork of Telluride Bear Creek. Expect snow in the upper part of the basin. Continue (NW), descending rapidly. Cross the stream coming from your left (S) and then stay slightly above and to the left of the main stream. Enter a large flat meadow on a shelf trail through the cliff. Snow conditions in this meadow have varied from knee-deep on every step to the entire meadow being vibrant purple with flowers. Stay 10 to 20 yards left of the stream until you reach the far side of the meadow. You may see a rusted wheelbarrow to your right just before the stream crossing. Cross to the right side of the stream just before the stream enters a narrow, steep channel and climb slightly. Get on the good trail and descend a series of switchbacks to the intersection of East Fork of Bear Creek (TR 513) and Wasatch Trail marked with forest service signs.

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[23.1] 11990	East Fork of Bear Creek Trail. Exposure. (TR 513). Turn right (NNW) and descend on this well-maintained trail paralleling the West Fork of the Telluride Bear Creek. Soon you will be far above the stream as it cascades through a series of cliffs. After a half mile, the trail descends steeply through a series of switchbacks. The myriad of mountain flowers encountered in this section are fantastic. Just around the switchback, beyond where the trail goes directly below a waterfall (watch for ice on the trail), you are looking directly down the valley of the east fork of Bear Creek. If the valley is filled with snow, leave the trail, climb down to the snow and practice your glissading technique as you head for the confluence of the Main Fork and East Fork of Bear Creek. Pick up the trail again in the flat between the East Fork and Main Fork streams about 200 yards above their meeting point. General direction of travel is (NNW). If the East Fork snowfield is not there, follow the trail that stays on the right (E) of the East Fork to where it crosses the East Fork, then follow the trail to the confluence of the two streams. At the confluence, angle left, cross the Main Fork, and then follow the trail to where the East Fork trail merges with the Wasatch Trail (FS 508). The trail intersection and next 100 to 200 yards may be under a snow slide field. This snow will be very hard and you can easily walk on top of it. Cross the snow slide, continuing (N), and pick up the Wasatch Trail keeping the main drainage of Bear Creek to your right.
[24.4] 10840	Nellie Mine. The remains of the Nellie Mine and stamp mill are to your left. Just below the Nellie, a small side stream coming in from the left uses the trail as its bed. Exposure. Carefully work your way down the water covered stream bed/trail/cliff. Once off the cliff, cross a footbridge and follow the increasingly improving trail (N) down canyon. There may be one or two more snow slide fields to cross as you descend. As you experience in the upper canyon, the stream drops much faster than the trail and you are soon some 600 vertical feet above the water. For the final 500 vertical feet, drop back down toward the stream. The trail again goes into multiple switchback mode, crossing a small side stream several times. You get a good view of the scenic Bear Creek Falls from this section.
[25.8] 9680	Telluride Bear Creek Road-Wasatch Trail Intersection. Elev. 9680. (There is a Forest Service sign on a wooden post indicating Wasatch Trail.) Turn left (N) on one-time jeep road that is closed to vehicle traffic and follow it to Telluride. The road remains on the left (W) side of Bear Creek until the Bear Creek Canyon meets the main valley of the San Miguel River, then it swings left (W) into the San Miguel Valley. The town of Telluride will be below you. The aid station is located at the visible permanent white canopy in the town park on the east side of town. You are going to go completely past the park (W) before leaving the road and traversing the hill back to aid station. At the intersection of the Bear Creek Road with the Ski Area Maintenance Road coming in from the left, take the trail off the right side of the road, making a hard (about 150 degree) turn and go (E) toward the park. When you reach the park, turn left (N) and go past the soccer field, past the basketball court, and cross the grass to the aid station at the canopy in the Telluride town park.
[27.8] 8750	TELLURIDE AID STATION-CREW ACCESS-BAG DROP. Leave aid area on sidewalk (WNW); pass a small lake on your right and cross the San Miguel River on a footbridge. As soon as you cross the bridge, turn right (N) on the paved bicycle path. Follow the path about 50 feet, then angle left on a dirt trail. Cross Colorado Avenue, the main street of Telluride, onto Alder Street (N). Continue straight ahead onto a private driveway when Alder Street ends. After about 50 feet, when the driveway curves left, stay straight on a trail. (There is a children's swing set to your left.) Climb this trail past several houses and walled building sites to the Tomboy Road (FR 869).
[28.2] 9020	Tomboy Road. Turn left (W) and go downhill for about 150 feet. Turn right (WNW) at the first road on your right and go around the pipe gate. This was the Liberty Bell Basin jeep road, but it is now closed to vehicular access. (Next to the gate is a Forest Service map board describing the Wiebe trail). Pass the covered reservoir (left) then continue to climb on the rocky roadbed including several switchbacks. Cross the ridge into the Cornet Creek Drainage then stay right on the road (N) at the well-marked Jud Wiebe trail intersection. After you cross a relatively flat area, you may hear a strange sound coming from your right. This is a pressure relief valve for the water pipe carrying part of the Telluride domestic water supply. When the pressure releases, water is dispersed from a tall pipe and there is a lot of noise. In 1994, some of the helpers from the Kroger Canteen aid station came down here after dark and thought they were hearing a bear. They spent a chilly night waiting for daylight before they realized what it was. Stay right, at the only intersection you will encounter while in the trees. The road climbs sharply with multiple switchbacks and the direction of travel gradually becomes easterly in upper Liberty Bell Basin.
[31.2] 11600	Just below timberline, the road levels and you enter an area where you can look directly up to the Mendota Saddle in upper Liberty Bell basin. When the road turns right (S), leave the road (E) continuing the direction you have been going and follow a trail up the right (S) side of the drainage. At about 12000', the trail swings left (NE), crosses a small flat, turns east through the slide rock on the west side of Mendota Peak, and switches back to Mendota Saddle. Possibility of snow here.

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[32.1] 12560	Mendota Saddle. If it is a snowy year, there will be a cornice on the east side the saddle. From the saddle, stop and take a bearing to Virginius Pass as follows: On the big flat area that is just a little higher than the Mendota Saddle and is on the far side of Marshall Basin, find the power poles that are still standing (NE). The line from the Mendota Saddle across these power poles points directly at Virginius Pass and you are going to make a big arc around the left side of the basin to it. The power poles will always be to the right of you as you make this traverse. Cross the saddle around the left side of the cornice onto the shelf trail. Exposure. Marshall Basin is geologically very mineralized and many millions of dollars worth of ore, including gold, was mined from the area. Traverse (NNE) across the head of Marshall Basin, losing about 50 feet of altitude to the Mendota Mine, then gradually climb and traverse across the snowfields around the basin. The route gradually turns with the mountain until you are going (ENE). Continue to traverse around the hill until you are in a gully full of rotten rock and the only way out is up. Climb steeply to Virginius Pass on a mixture of scree and snow.
[32.7] 13100	VIRGINIUS PASS-KROGER CANTEEN. Pass #4. Cornice, Acrophobia, Exposure. Chuck Kroger and Kathy Greene started this aid station in 1992, and since then dedicated crews from Telluride backpack supplies into here for a minimal aid station. Chuck became a regular participant/finisher of the Hardrock before succumbing to pancreatic cancer in December 2007. The next section involves going down three very steep pitches with a bench, or flat area, between each. Go (N), down the steep snow/rock field. THERE WILL BE A FIXED ROPE FROM THE TOP OF THE PASS INTO VIRGINIUS BASIN. In heavy snow years you can glissade this pitch. If you plan to do a sitting glissade, it is strongly recommended that long pants be worn. At the first bench, angle slightly left to the edge of the second steep pitch and descend it on snow or broken rock, staying left of the stream. Enjoy the very gradual drop on the bench until you are thrust out onto the top of the third pitch. Stay left of the stream on the mine dumps. It is usually better to try and descend this pitch on snow if it is available than to go down the steep hard packed dump. IF CONDITIONS WARRANT, EITHER A FIXED ROPE OR STEPS WILL BE CUT HERE. Near the bottom of the steep mine dumps, turn right (NE) to the level space where remains of buildings can be seen. This is the Virginius Mine site where people used to live all winter to work the mine.
[33.2] 12160	Virginius Mine. Pass the ruined buildings and take FS 853.1C (NE) around the ridge between Virginius and Sidney Basins. In heavy snow years the remains of snow slides in this area can force you to traverse on steep hard snow. As you descend, you will see the remains of the Mountain Top boarding house across Governor Basin. You intersect numerous roads on this descent toward timberline. Always take the road that goes downhill and maintains a line toward Potosi Peak (E) across Yankee Boy Basin. After you reach timberline, this active jeep road switches back several times before heading (W) into Governor Basin. Cross the stream coming out of Governor Basin, probably wading, and bear right (NE) at the intersection with the Governor Basin Road that is closed with a pipe gate. Continue down the road to the GOVERNOR BASIN AID STATION that will be located just across the bridge over Sneffels Creek.
[38.4] 9692	Camp Bird Mine Road. Stay left on Road 853, also labeled State Road 361. Follow this good road (NNE) down Canyon Creek to Ouray. This is a popular road for tourists because it does not require four wheel drive and is dusty. During daylight hours, expect a lot of traffic. For this section of road, there will be minimal marking and you may go several miles without seeing a marker. As you come down Canyon Creek you will cross to the right, (SW) side of the creek. As Canyon Creek approaches the confluence with the Uncompahgre River you will see Ouray below you to the left. You are going to take a trail that leads to a footbridge across Canyon Creek. As Ouray comes into view, begin watching for this trail turnoff to your left. There is Forest Service sign for the Sutton Mine Trail and the south Ice Park Trail on right side of the road. Ninety yards below this make a hard (120 degree) turn to your left onto a good trail.
[42.6] 7910	Follow the excellent trail built by the Ouray Trails Group about 0.1 miles (NNW) around the hill to the high bridge over Canyon Creek. Cross the bridge and open the white gate on the far side. Go through the tunnel, then down the steep section with fixed hand cables. The trail merges onto a jeep road, which meets Queen Street after about a hundred yards. Turn right on Queen Street (E) and follow it to the intersection with Oak Street. Turn left (NW) onto Oak Street. At 7th Avenue, Oak Street becomes a two lane paved road with a trailer park on the right. Continue on Oak Street (N) to the end of the trailer park then turn right (E) through a parking lot just before the green metal building with white doors (sign: Ouray City Shop). Cross the cable footbridge into town park where the aid station is located near the restrooms and picnic tables.
[43.9] 7870	OURAY AID STATION-CREW ACCESS-BAG DROP-PACERS ALLOWED FROM HERE. Lowest point on the course. You will now go back through Ouray on the East side of the Uncompahgre River (Left side looking upstream). From the aid station, go along a jeep road past the Gazebo. Cross the footbridge over Cascade Creek. When the trail meets an extension of 9th Avenue, turn left (E) on 9 th Avenue for about 30 yards. Turn right (S) on 2nd Street and follow it for 6 blocks to 3rd Avenue. Turn right (W) on 3 rd Ave. About 40 yards past the Victorian Inn Motel that is on your right, angle left onto the Box Canyon Fall Park Road (sign on right side of road) going against the one way traffic. Follow the road through Box Canyon Park and at the stone building angle left across the bridge over the Uncompahgre River.

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[45.1] 7900	Ice Park Overlook and Trail (East side of Uncompahgre). As soon as you cross the bridge, turn right (S) and follow the trail with built steps up to the high bridge on the Camp Bird Road. The overlook platform for viewing ice climbers will be to your right and the search and rescue building will be to your left. At the high bridge, stay left of the guardrail to its end, then cross the Camp Bird Road at about a 45-degree angle going downhill. Immediately get onto the Ice Park Trail (Forest Service Sign) (SE) and climb steeply up into a shallow gully that opens onto a rock rib paralleling Highway 550. The trail is well cairned and easy to follow.
[45.5] 8210	At the green gate, merge onto a jeep road, go downhill around two switchbacks and follow the road 0.5mi almost to the Uncompahgre Dam (SSE). Watch for an obscure left turn on a deer trail into the first small gully about 20 yards beyond where the Ice Park Trail leaves the road and heads right toward the river, about 50 yards before the dam. For the past couple of years, there has been a stack of mattresses on your right between the turnoff and the dam. Climb the steep deer trail to an old wooden tram tower located on the remains of an old road. Follow the old road (S) less than 100 yards, then drop steeply down on a deer trail to the east side of the lake created by the dam. Continue along the eastern shore to the stakes where we used to attach the rope for wading the river. Across the river is a traffic sign warning those who may be floating down the river that there is a dam ahead. Find the good trail angling left into the trees, climb up to merge onto the remains of the original Otto Mears toll road. Follow this tread a few hundred yards past some concrete footing and large iron mining operation ruins. When the roadbed ends, make a switchback to the left onto a trail and climb to the east side of the tunnel on Highway 550.
[46.6] 8480	Tunnel. Cross the parking area, and make a hard left turn onto the Bear Creek National Recreation Trail , TR 241 (red, white and blue sign). Acrophobia, Exposure. This well-maintained trail starts at the south end of the tunnel on Highway 550 (W) and goes directly over the top of the tunnel. It continues in a generally (E) direction as it switchbacks about 15 times climbing above the highway, then enters the narrow canyon above the Ouray Bear Creek. Once on this trail, it is almost impossible to get off of it for the next 4 miles. Marking on this trail will be minimal. You will have to wade several streams coming from your left and contend with dramatic drops of 300-400 feet on your right. Use caution wading the streams as the algae build up on the rocks in this water tends to make footing very slippery. At about the 10,000-foot level you will pass the ruins of the Grizzly Bear Mine buildings.
[50.6] 11100	Yellow Jacket Mine. Cross the streambed, probably dry or containing very little water, coming from the left (N), then angle right (S) on the wide trail. The buildings associated with the Yellow Jacket will be on your right. Just past the Yellow Jacket, cross (wade) the stream coming from the left (E), then continue straight to the next switchback in the trail. Continue straight ahead (S) in the direction of Engineer Pass as indicated by a metal trail sign. Some years, a huge snow slide field fills the valley about a hundred yards from here. This snow slide goes over Bear Creek coming off the south side of Engineer Mountain and is usually hard enough to walk on. Try to stay to one side of where you think the stream is running under the snow. If you would prefer not to use the snow route, there is an animal trail to the left and above the stream. During dry years, the trail is on the left of the stream. At the upper end of the snow slide, the trail, FT 242, crosses to the right (W) side of Bear Creek. Stay on the right side for only a couple of hundred yards, then cross back to the left side and climb up through the timber on a good trail.
[51.9] 11800	ENGINEER AID STATION. This is another station that must be backpacked to its location. This aid station is on a bench just a few hundred feet vertical feet below timberline. Engineer Mountain is the large peak directly in front (S) of you. Your target is the right hand (W) ridge of Engineer Mountain toward Oh! Point. The trail out of the aid station takes you on a line toward the east ridge of Engineer Mountain. Continue on this line (SSE) until you meet a small stream coming from the left. Cross the stream, then parallel it (ESE) until you meet an obvious built trail. Turn right (S) on this trail and go up the valley, first south then (SSW) as you go around the head of the valley. As you move back into the middle of the valley and under the east ridge off Engineer Mountain, the direction of travel is again straight south.
[52.6] 12200	The trail merges into an abandoned wagon road/trail just above a stream crossing and near some mine tailings. Just below the mine tailings, turn right (S) and leave the trail that is now heading toward Engineer Pass, the low saddle on the left (E) side of Engineer Peak. Work your way up the steep hillside directly toward the right (W) ridge of Engineer Peak. The long flat ridge you are heading for connects Engineer Peak with Oh! Point. Aim for the flat part of the ridge closest to Engineer Peak. There will be a blinking light here to help guide you, especially during the dark hours. You top out on a jeep road that runs east-west along the ridge that connects Oh! point and Engineer Mountain. Turn left (E) and go about 30 yards, uphill, to the Engineer Pass Jeep Road, RD 18.
[53.2] 12910	Engineer Pass Road, <u>Pass # 5</u> . Turn right (S) and begin your descent into the North Fork of the Animas River. (The full Spanish name of this river is the Rio de las Animas Perdidas - "The River of Lost Souls"- any empathy here?). This well-used jeep road swings (SE) across the (S) side of Engineer Mountain and goes through one dip before reaching the first switch back (12660). Ignore the road coming in from the left (E) and go around the switchback (W) continuing downhill.

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[54.9] 12040	Engineer-Mineral Creek Road Intersection. <u>Continue straight (S)!!!</u> There are metal BLM signs here - you want to go toward Animas Forks and Silverton. Stay left at the next intersection and take a sharp switchback down toward the Denver Bridge. Stay right at the Cinnamon Pass Road, well signed by the BLM, continuing downhill. You will see the ghost town of Animas Forks across the canyon to the right at the mouth of California Gulch. This is another one of the important mine/mill site locations in the San Juan Mountains, once even having a railroad to it. During the run, you do not go to the town, but stay across the canyon from it on the east side of the Animas River drainage. Stay straight at the intersection with the upper Animas Forks Road coming in from the right, then drop steeply for a quarter mile and merge with the lower Animas Forks Road. The BLM sign here, which you will have to go past and turn around to read, says Alpine Highway. There is a BLM built toilet a few yards up the Animas Forks Road to your right. Continue straight (S) down the Engineer Pass Road. At the bridge, cross the Animas River, and immediately turn right into the Grouse Gulch Aid Station.
[58.4] 10710	GROUSE GULCH AID STATION-CREW ACCESS-BAG DROP. Crew access, reachable with a standard auto and some careful driving. From the aid station, backtrack the way you came into the aid station, crossing the auto bridge (N) over the Animas River and going uphill on the Engineer Pass Road. After about 150 yards, turn hard right (E) on an abandoned jeep road that climbs up the face of the mountain and goes around six or eight switchbacks before going into Grouse Gulch. Once above tree line, leave the road at the first switchback, continuing straight ahead on a trail in an (ESE) direction along the left (N) side of the stream. The trail stays high to the left of the stream. When you reach the top of a low ridge where you can see a small lake to the right, the trail becomes very faint. Angle left (N) up the ridge for about 100 yards, then turn right (ESE) on a distinct trail that climbs across the face of the mountain toward the head of the Grouse Gulch basin. The trail switchbacks to a broad grassy saddle. When the trail disappears in the saddle, continue straight ahead (ENE) to the low point in the ridge.
[60.9] 13020	Elev. 13020. American-Grouse Pass. <u>Pass #6.</u> As you cross the pass, Handies Peak will be directly in front of you (E) across American Basin. There will probably be a large amount of snow in American Basin. Angle to the right (ESE) from the top of the pass. The trail drops gradually following the curve of the upper American Basin and stays to the left and below a series of cliffs. Continue to drop gradually into American Basin until you cross the Lake Fork of the Gunnison River and join the American Basin Trail to Handies Peak. (Just above the word American on your Drake Map.)
[61.6] 12400	American Basin Trail. Follow the BLM trail (SSE), climbing steadily and cross the Sloan Lake Stream coming from your right. Cross a marshy flat to the right of a sign that requests hikers to stay on the trail. This is to prevent erosion to the high tundra that has suffered with the large number of people hiking and climbing here. Stay on the trail as it goes right (SSE) and climb several switchbacks to within 50 yards of Sloan Lake.
[62.6] 12920	Sloan Lake. The trail angles left (NNE), climbing up across a small ridge before dropping about 120 vertical feet through a slide rock basin. Expect snow as well as slide rock. Continue on the switchback trail, going from (ENE) to (ESE), and climb to the saddle south of Handies Peak. At the saddle, angle left (N) up the well-beaten (SW) ridge route to the summit of Handies Peak.
[63.7] 14048	Handies Peak, <u>Pass #7.</u> Highest point on the course. The easiest way to make sure you are going the correct direction off the summit is to face across American Basin toward Grouse-American Pass. Turn right (N) and follow the Handies Peak-Whitecross Mountain ridge, using caution on the steep descent off the summit block. If there is a lot of snow along the ridge, be sure you stay well to the left of the snow edge to avoid any cornices that have formed above Grizzly Gulch. Below the summit block, continue down the crest of the relatively gentle ridge to the saddle before point 13,077', then make a hard right turn onto the cairned trail into Grizzly Gulch. There may be a lot of snow in this area, but the high volume of foot traffic should have a good path beat in. You drop quickly down the east side of the ridge around three switchbacks, and then parallel (NNE) the Handies Peak-Whitecross Mountain ridge to about the 12600' level. The route then becomes more easterly, using several switchbacks to take you into the bottom of the Grizzly Gulch Basin and south of Whitecross Mountain. At about the 12,200' level, cross to the right side of the stream for a short distance, then cross back to the left. You will stay to the left side of the drainage the rest of the way to Burrows Park.
[65.5] 11800	Grizzly Gulch Lake Trail. Near timberline the stream and trail coming from Grizzly Lake will be on your right. Continue straight (E) keeping the stream to your right (S). Descend into the timber, staying on the trail all the way to Burrows Park. About 150 feet before Burrows Park, cross the Lake Fork of the Gunnison River on a metal bridge.
[67.6] 10590	BURROWS PARK AID STATION. There is a BLM built toilet here at the intersection of the Grizzly Gulch Trail and Cinnamon Pass Road. Burrows Park is a major camping/parking area for climbers attempting Handies, Redcloud or Sunlight Peaks. Turn right (SSE) on the Cinnamon Pass Road (4 RD). Follow this very popular jeep road for 3.2 miles. Those of you who are here between about 8 am and Noon will meet a large number of vehicles. Be Alert!! One section of this road offers a spectacular example of a shelf road that has been blasted out of the cliffs high above the Lake Fork of the Gunnison. When you get to the intersection of the Lake Fork of the Gunnison and Cottonwood Creek Valleys, turn right (S) off the road at the BLM signs to the Sherman Overlook site.

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[70.9] 9925	Sherman Overlook. Just past the signs, take a hard left (E), cross the meadow (30-40 yards) and enter the trees. Pick up a game trail to your right in the first gully and follow it down (S) ~300 yards to an abandoned road. Follow this abandoned road down about 0.5mi (SSE), then turn right onto a game trail that angles back toward the Lake Fork of the Gunnison. Cross the ruins of an old mine on the dump below a rock wall, and follow a good secondary trail to the Sherman Road. Turn right (W) on the auto road, immediately cross the bridge over the Lake Fork of the Gunnison river, and go a half-mile to the aid station.
[71.9] 9640	SHERMAN AID STATION-CREW ACCESS-BAG DROP. Station will be located near the restrooms that are located at the Cataract Gulch Trail turn off. The trail into Cataract Gulch, TR 475, is well marked with BLM signs. Turn left (S) on the Cataract Gulch Trail, cross Cottonwood Creek on a steel bridge and follow the excellent trail into the gulch. There will not be many, if any markers on this section. A minimum number of markers will be put in during marking, but we have had a problem with people pulling markers from Sherman to Cataract Lake. Therefore, do not be surprised if you do not see any markers in this section. For the first mile, the trail stays on the north face sloping of Cottonwood Creek as it climbs through a series of switchbacks for some 600 vertical feet. At about 10,200', the trail enters into Cataract Gulch on the left (E) side of the stream, crosses the stream four times in the narrow part of the canyon, then climbs left (E) away from the stream as it approaches timberline. The second crossing is just above a waterfall and has been known to be very slick with algae, so be extra careful at that crossing. (In recent years there has been a log crossing up stream about 30 yards.) The trail leaves the stream (E) and climbs rapidly through the willows before turning back to the South in the high meadows. When the good trail disappears at about 12000', cross the stream that drains Cataract lake. Bear right (WSW) until you meet a good sheep trail. Turn left (S) on it. There will be a couple of small ponds on your right.
[76.5] 12100	Cataract Lake. The lake will be to the left across the willow-filled valley. You will be climbing steadily toward the saddle, Pole-Cataract Divide, directly in front (S) of you. Pass to the left (E) of the lake sitting on top of the Continental Divide. You decide which ocean the water leaving it goes to.
[77.0] 12200	Elev. 12200. Cataract-Pole Divide. <u>Pass #8.</u> At the far end of the lake, you will be looking into upper end of the Main Fork of Pole Creek. Just past the end of the lake, turn right (W) on a sheep trail that traverses around the hill at about 12,200'. After about 250 yards, turn left (SSW), leave the obvious sheep trail and follow a secondary animal trail steeply downhill through the willows. Cross a small flat slide rock outcropping on the left. Follow the faint trail to the stream coming from the right, cross it and work your way through the swampy area, climbing slightly before continuing down and across the hillside to the right (W) of the drainage and above a large meadow. This inviting-looking meadow is very swampy. To your left, you will be able to see the Colorado Trail descending from the east. Aim for the point about 50 yards right of the intersection of the Colorado Trail and Pole Creek always staying right of Pole Creek and above the meadow.
[79.9] 11810	Colorado Trail. TR 787 or TR 1776. Merge with the Colorado Trail/Continental Divide Trail continuing downhill (SSW) on the right side of the Main Fork of Pole Creek. The canyon narrows and you will cross the main stream twice as you descend through this high valley dotted with small ponds. After a short climb from the second crossing, you open out into a large valley with three intersecting streams. One is the Main Fork of Pole Creek that you have been following, the second to your right is the North Fork of Pole Creek that you will cross, and the third that you are looking up at in front of you is the West Fork of Pole Creek. The route climbs to the head of the West Fork. Come down a steep trail toward the confluence of the North and Main Forks of Pole Creek, keeping the Main fork on your left. Cross the North Fork Trail, and continue straight (W) wading the North Fork of Pole Creek, above its confluence with the Main Fork. Angle down canyon (SSW) on the W side of Pole Creek on a good trail. After crossing a small stream coming in from the right, climb onto a willow-covered bench and look for a large stand of spruce and fir trees at the edge of a bare grass-covered ridge. If you are looking directly down Pole Creek, they should be at about the two o'clock position to your right. Leave the trail to your right and work your way through the willows (50 yards) to the trail you see coming off the steep, grassy hillside. Once on the trail, angle (SW) toward where the trees and grass meet on the bench. The Pole Creek Aid Station will be located about a hundred yards away near the top of the small ridge to the left (S) of a pond.
[80.8] 11460	Elev. 11260. POLE CREEK AID STATION. This is another station where supplies have been packed to the site, this time by burro. (A small piece of history. There have been three helicopter evacuations from this aid station, two for runners and one for an aid person.) From the aid station, head directly (W) toward a wooden pole that marks the trail into the West Fork of Pole Creek. The trail you are on has two designations on the map - the La Garita Stock Drive and the Continental Divide Trail (TR 918 or 787). The trail will stay high to the right of the stream for 1.4 miles, through endless grassy hillsides and small gullies, while crossing numerous small seeps that can support knee-deep mud. You will cross the West Fork stream where it turns from flowing out of the west to northwest. This crossing is through a swampy willow area with lots of large, deep, muddy holes. Just after the crossing beyond the willows, the trail crosses a quarter mile long meadow (W). This area has many elk that have been known to pull the markers from the ground and let them drop, and to stomp the markers down as the herds cross the area. There is a large wooden post set away from the trees in the meadow that marks the route. Just past the post, angle slightly right (WNW) skirting the trees, and find the trail crossing Sheep Creek, coming off Sheep Mountain to your left (S).

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[82.5] 11540	Sheep Creek. Make sure you get on the trail here, otherwise getting through the willows that cover the hillside for the next mile will be difficult. The West Fork of Pole Creek branches into three forks in this upper basin and you get to cross all of them. From here the trail climbs in a (WNW) direction to the headwaters of the West Fork, then tops the continental divide on the Maggie-Pole Pass.
[84.2] 12530	Maggie-Pole Pass. <u>Pass #9</u> . Continental Divide. Go downhill (WNW) on the Continental Divide Trail, La Garita Stock Trail. Just before reaching the stream in the first drainage, the Continental Divide Trail turns left staying left (S) of the drainage while the La Garita Stock drive crosses the drainage and continues (NNW). Turn left (W) onto the Continental Divide Trail. As you descend, the direction of travel changes from (W) to (SW) on a line directly toward Canby Mountain that you see across Maggie Gulch. As you descend, you will be able to see the end of the Maggie Gulch Road, the site of the aid station. When you get almost directly above the aid station, leave the Continental Divide Trail making a right turn (W) cross country toward the end of the road. About 100 yards above the end of the road, you will merge into a good trail that takes you directly to the aid station site.
[85.1] 11640	MAGGIE GULCH AID STATION. Located just below the road end on the tailings pile is a well-preserved stamp mill. This water-powered crusher was used to reduce rock to dust so the gold and silver could be more easily separated. Find the trail that continues up canyon (S) on the left side of the Maggie Gulch Stream and go about 0.2mi. As you approach the intersection of the Maggie Gulch Stream with a stream coming from the west, that I will call MG West, turn right (W) on a trail that takes you just above the confluence and cross the Maggie Gulch Stream. Follow the trail up the left side of MG West for about 100 yards (W), cross MG West on the trail and climb a few hundred yards in the (NW) direction, watching carefully for the switchback. A few feet beyond the switchback the trail disappears. Pick a line directly up the mountain (W) and climb steeply toward the head of MG West. When you reach the ridge high above the steep gully of MG West, angle right on the ridge top. At about the 12,500' level, pass an old sheep herder's camp with a set of rusting bedsprings and turn left (S) across the bench on a sheep trail. Cross MG West and continue on the trail for about 0.4mi, climbing gradually and heading directly toward Canby Mountain. On your Drake Map you are going cross country between the two streams shown on the west side of Maggie Gulch and north of swampy area below Canby Mountain. At about 12600 feet and just before reaching the second stream, angle right (SW) on a good sheep trail that allows you traverse under the cliff band guarding the ridge. You want to meet the Buffalo Boy Ridge about 0.1mi (S) of the low point in the ridge where the cliff band ends at the ridge. When you get to the (S) end of the cliffs on the sheep trail, you will still be about 100 vertical feet below the ridge. Continue to climb (S) for another 100 yards, then make a switchback and climb to the ridge/cliff intersection. This small saddle (13,060) is where the old pack trail between Maggie Gulch and Rocky Gulch crosses the ridge (Drake Map along the N side of Canby). Acrophobia, Exposure.
[86.5] 13060	Buffalo Boy Ridge. As you reach the top of the ridge, you will be looking into Rocky Gulch. The remains of the Buffalo Boy and Tram Shed are readily visible in the bottom of the basin. Also visible are the cables of the tram and several tram towers used to carry the ore and supplies between the Buffalo Boy and Cunningham Gulch. Turn left (S) on the ridge top and follow the trail over a small peak (13,214) (For those of you here in the daylight, the entire Grenadier Range with its toothy grin is laid out in front of you), then drop toward the 13,060' saddle (NW) of Canby Peak. From the saddle, angle right on the built trail that leaves the ridge and traverses the right (W) side of Canby Peak (SSE). As you come around Canby Peak, the trail drops gradually and swings more toward the (SE). Take a sighting on the ridge across (S) Stony Pass. On the left side of this ridge is an unnamed, very pointed, pyramid shaped peak (13165') with a deep saddle to its right (W). That saddle, Green Mountain Pass, is your target. The Stony Pass Jeep Road can be seen below you. Continue on the trail until you are just beyond (E) of the top of Stony Pass. The trail disappears just beyond a steep gully and about 150 vertical feet above the road. Go beyond the gully onto the grassy slope then make several steep switchbacks down to the Stony Pass Jeep Road.
[87.6] 12580	Stony Pass. FR 737, 3RD. Cross the jeep road (SSW), and continue cross country toward the right (W) side of Peak 13165. Green Mountain is the high point in the ridge at about your two o'clock position. There are game/sheep trails through these high meadows that will lead you under Peak 13165 and into a gully filled with very dark dirt. Turn left, (SE), and climb this gully to the saddle. Turn right in the saddle and climb about 50 vertical feet until you can get around the snow cornice blocking descent into the Green Mountain Drainage.

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[88.2] 12980	Green Mountain Pass. From this pass you are going to make a very large U turn over a mile and half to get around the head of and into the bottom of the Green Mountain Valley. Stand on top of the ridge with Stony Pass and Canby Peak at your back. Go down the hill (S) for 0.15mi staying 40 to 50 yards to the right (W) side of the north/south ridge, the Continental Divide. To the left of the ridge (E) are the headwaters of the Rio Grande River while to the right is Green Mountain Valley. At the first saddle (12,800'), angle right (SSW) to the top of an east/west ridge that forms the head of the Green Mountain Valley. Follow the sheep trail or go cross country down the crest of this ridge (W) for 0.4mi, dropping rapidly into the upper (S) end of the Green Mountain Valley. Cross the stream at about the 12,200' level, and go downstream on the good trail that parallels the left side of the Green Mountain Stream (NNW). Some 0.75mi down this valley you climb onto the ridge between Green Mountain Valley and Cunningham Gulch. Across the canyon to your left, you will be able to see Dives Basin and the Little Giant Peak, your next and final climb. Follow the ridge paralleling Green Mountain Stream (NNW) 0.25mi until the ridge drops precipitously, then make a hard left (SW) and work your way out onto the face of the mountain above Cunningham Gulch. Make switchbacks across the face dropping steeply into Cunningham Gulch. About 100 vertical feet below the ridge is a hard-to-find old mining trail that continues in a switchback pattern paralleling the Green Mountain Stream (W). After reaching some big spruce, the trail makes a final switchback (11,200') and begins a long steady descending traverse (SSW) parallel to Cunningham Gulch. The trail improves somewhat as you descend across steep grassy slopes and through a series of cliffs, (Exposure, Acrophobia). As you descend, the Cunningham Gulch Aid Station will become visible below you. Continue on the trail until it connects with the Cunningham Gulch Road, upstream from the Aid Station. Turn right (N), and go a quarter of a mile on this road to the Aid Station.
[91.2] 10380	CUNNINGHAM AID STATION-CREW ACCESS-BAG DROP. Locate the waterfall coming out of Dives Basin (W) and work toward it. Wade Cunningham Creek, then angle right (NNW) climbing steadily and cross the stream coming out of Dives Basin well below the waterfall and pick up the Shenandoah/Dives Mine Trail. Willows have grown over the lower sections of this trail, so watch carefully for the switchbacks. Once into the switchbacks, the general direction of the trail is west, staying on the right (N) side of the Dives Stream. There are mine tailings and ruins evident to your left as you climb the slope. At about 12000', you will cross the headwall cliff and move into the upper Dives Basin. The remains of collapsed buildings and a large depression showing where a shaft collapsed illustrate some of the energy that has been invested in this mountain. Go past the collapsed building of the Dives Mine and pick up the trail on the right (N) side of the basin moving (NW). After about 200 yards, angle right (N) and climb steeply on a series of animal trails toward the east ridge of Little Giant Peak. At 13000' you will meet an old wagon road that is marked with a series of metal rods sticking 2-3' out of the ground.
[93.4] 13000	Dives-Little Giant Pass. <u>Pass #12</u> . Last Pass (about time!!). At the east ridge coming off Little Giant Peak, elev. 13000', get on the wagon road and traverse the east side of Little Giant Peak, going (N). Acrophobia, Exposure. This section of trail is subject to holding large amounts of snow until late in the summer. Directly below the trail is a very steep grass slope that within 100 yards empties over sheer cliffs that are several hundred feet high. A slip here could be fatal! IF SNOW CONDITIONS WARRANT, THERE WILL BE A FIXED ROPE HERE.
[93.6] 12970	Little Giant Saddle. To your left you will be looking down Little Giant Basin. Your direction of travel (NW) will be toward the Mayflower Mill and tailings piles you see at the bottom just across the Animas River. The trail leaves the saddle on some blasted tread with metal support rail and rods holding up some sections, then skirts the north side of Little Giant Basin. If you are here in daylight most of the trail can be seen from the saddle. As you get into the basin, the trail goes from a (NNW) to (W) direction. There may be some snowfields in here that can be very tricky to come down at night when they are frozen. At about 12000' and just above a lake, you will meet the Little Giant Jeep Road. Go right, continuing downhill. At the next lake, you'll find the ruins of the Big Giant Mine, the location of one of the first ore strikes in the Silverton area. Continue downhill for more than two miles on the road (W going to SW) and into the trees.
[97.8] 9900	Arrastra Gulch Road. Turn right (W), go about 30 yards and make a hard left turn (SSE) on jeep track to Arrastra Gulch Stream. Cross the stream and follow the abandoned road and pipeline (W) paralleling Arrastra Gulch to a metal tram tower that was part of the Mayflower tram. Angle right on a jeep road and follow it down to a bench. At the first intersecting road, turn left (WSW). This road stays on a wide bench, passing to the left of a house, then funnels into a trail. For the next mile there are a series of ups and downs, willows, beaver dams, and some places where the trail and side streams are indistinguishable from each other. The route is on a bench that parallels the Animas River and the direction becomes more (SSW). You will be able to see the county road that follows the Animas drainage across the canyon to your right. When the trail meets a road just above the Lakawanna Mill, stay level going straight ahead, and get back on the trail as it enters the trees. You are now above the north end of Silverton. The trail will exit the trees about 0.15mi above the Silverton Ski Hut. Angle right, down the hill to the ski hut.
[99.9] 9320	Get on 14 th street at the ski hut, follow it (NW) for about three blocks and angle right to the Animas River. In the next four blocks you will cross the Animas River (on the bridge), pass the red stone City Hall that will be on your left, and cross Greene Street (the paved main street in Silverton). One block after Greene Street, turn left (SW) on Reese Street and go two blocks to 12 th Street. At 12 th Street turn right (NW) and go one half block to the Silverton High School.
[100.5] 9320	Elev. 9320. SILVERTON HIGH SCHOOL GYM FINISH. Stop! Kiss the Hardrock!!