

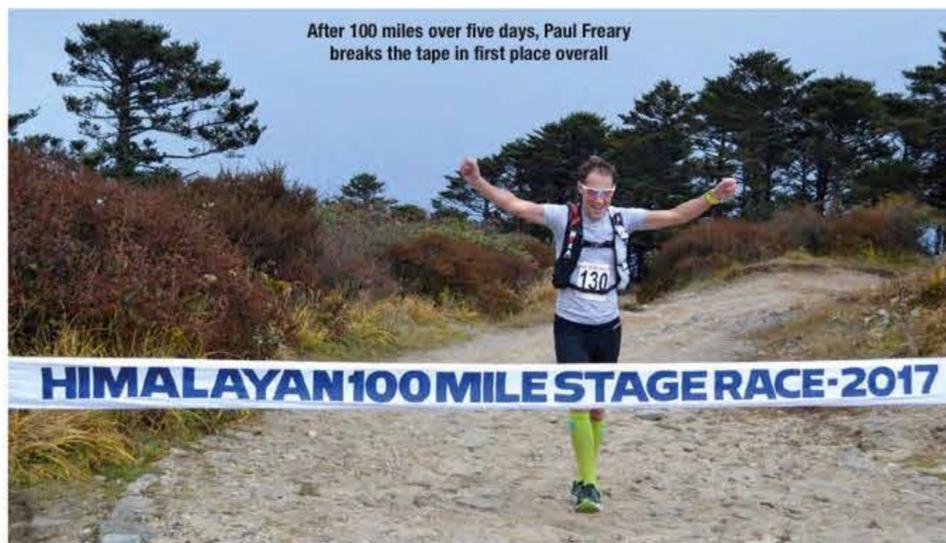
replacement now lay strewn miles down stream.

With the terrain, altitude and distance being considerations today was again to be a new record for myself, being over five hours on my feet. Racing became about surviving and protecting the legs a little, having got past halfway, the next two days where to be on the road and hopefully (having always considered myself more of a track and road runner) something a little closer to home.

Day four: Rimbik (6560ft) to Palmajua (6560ft) – 13 miles

Waking up this morning, most of the runners were aware of the stiffness in their legs from the previous days steep descents, so the first five miles downhill were somewhat of a shock to the system.

The route today was on the road, but did include a couple of river crossings, with small bridges and steeping stones adding to the scenic route along the valley bottom. After a flat middle three miles it was up again to the finish, with a familiar switchback road leading up the mountainside.



After 100 miles over five days, Paul Freary breaks the tape in first place overall

For myself today was a chance to increase what had become a slender lead of just five minutes. Being neck and neck with my closest rival at the foot of the final climb I pushed hard, soon taking a lead which I would increase to around 12 minutes in the overall classification and what I hoped would be enough going into the final day.

Day Five: Palmajua (6560ft) to Maneybhanayang (6600ft) – 17 miles

Although today would start and finish at similar altitudes, the 17-mile route would take us up

and over a peak at around 8500ft. The twists and turns of the road led us through thick pine forests until we finally emerged at the high point of the route with a temple standing resplendently overlooking the deep valleys and villages below.

From there the final 10-mile descent would be a last attempt to push the quads into submission as every footstep took us down to the finish line.

My Argentinean adversary had pushed me everyday, but today had proved a race too far as his legs cramped and he struggled to the finish, albeit

in fifth place on the day but holding on to second place overall.

The event had been an amazing experience, without doubt the hardest race I've ever taken part in but at the same time one in which I am so lucky and glad to have completed. The opportunity to see the world's highest peaks in this stunning setting was something which will live on in my memory for many years, reminding me that however hard hills become I won't ever perhaps encounter any with the same magnitude as those encountered here.



Relieved and exhausted competitors at the finish of the Himalayan 100-miler, including organiser CS Pandey (orange top)



FINAL STANDINGS

- Men**
 1: Paul Freary (GB) 17hr 35min
 2: Mariano Ontanon (ARG) 18hr 1min
 3: Jeremy Scriven (AUS) 21hr 31min
Ladies
 1: Catherine Blaine (USA) 20hr 15min
 2: Nine Scriven (USA) 22hr 36min
 3: Maikle Heymann (GER) 23hr 1min
Junior
 1: Brett Baker (GB) (age 15) – 25hr 58min

IN THE LONG RUN

WHAT WOULD YOU LOOK TO PACK FOR A HIMALAYAN 100-MILE STAGE RACE? PAUL FREARY OUTLINES THE KIT HE RELIED UPON IN THE MOUNTAINS

FOR any endurance challenge – but particularly one that sees you covering 100 mountainous miles in five days – you need to be confident in the kit you'll be using. Here's a selection of the items I found invaluable.



Support Shoe – Saucony Omni 16

Price: £120.00
Stockist: saucony.com

Footwear choice was very difficult for a race with such varied terrain. While many runners went for trail shoes for the duration of the Himalayan event I decided to stick with a pair of tried and tested road shoes.

To cover 100 miles I wanted to be sure of great cushioning and support throughout the race and for the little bit I lost in traction on the worst sections of the route I felt I made up for in overall comfort. Such was my confidence in this model I wore a new pair, straight from the box for the marathon on day three without any concerns.



CEP – Clonotech Recovery Tights

Price: £160.00
Stockist: cepsports.co.uk

Racing for five days back-to-back means recovery is a key factor. I tried to get these made-to-measure recover tights on as soon as possible after each day's racing. I'm convinced the precision compression fit made a difference with my legs feeling fresh and ready to go every morning.

From shoes and kit to nutritional assistance, here is the equipment that got Paul Freary through the Himalayan 100-mile stage race earlier this winter

The North Face – Thermoball Active Jacket

Price: £135.00
Stockist: thenorthface.co.uk

The great range of temperatures encountered during the event meant a jacket that is light, breathable and yet adds warmth when required is a necessity. This jacket proved invaluable throughout my trip, both during and after the days racing.



Secret Training – Stealth Energy Powder (unflavoured) 500g

Price: £7.99
Stockist: secret-training.com

Following the advice of the creator of this product I created a concentrated solution of the drink each day to use as my main energy source.

This concentrated carbohydrate and electrolyte solution provided me with an easy to use drink that I took onboard, sipping it throughout each stage of the race.

It meant I didn't have to depend on the local aid stations and I knew exactly what I was taking on board throughout the race – it proved to be what I believe the difference in winning the race instead of just completing.

Scott – RC 3-Part Poles

Price: £120.00
Stockist: scott-sports.com

On the very steepest sections of the route a pair of running poles can help tremendously. These easy to fold, three-section poles are ideal and being ultra-light means that are easy to carry and pack away.

