

Running Around Mountains and Lakes



To make some adventure runs even more interesting to me, I enjoy running around big things. Running around is fun. I also like to give people the runaround. I started that crazy practice back in 2005. I can't explain my fascination for running around stuff. Perhaps as a child I enjoyed getting dizzy. But there is some level of satisfaction looking at a giant landmark like a mountain, lake, or city and knowing that you have run all the way around it.

Here's a list of my runarounds:

- My house – 2001 – out of breath
- [Lake Mountain](#) – November 13, 2005 – 32 miles
- [Mount Timpanogos](#) – May 30, 2006 – 38 miles
- Landrock – Apr 13, 2009 – 26.2 miles.
- Schofield Lake – July 11, 2009
- [Utah Lake](#) – October 15, 2012 – 82 miles
- Sanpitch Mountains – November 23, 2012 – DNF – 65 miles
- [Brown Duck Mountain](#) – July 3, 2013 – 35 miles
- Mount Nebo – October 13, 2013 – 47 miles
- [South Oghirrh Mountains](#) – November 30, 2013 – 62 miles
- Saratoga Springs City – October 25, 2014 – 39 miles
- Lehi City – January 17, 2015 – 33 miles
- American Fork City – January 19, 2015 – 20 miles
- [Onaqui Mountains](#) – March 12, 2016 – 48 miles

[Lake Mountain](#) – November 13, 2005 – 32 miles

Behind my house on the west side of Utah Lake is a large mountain that rises about 3,300 feet above the valley floor. I hatched the idea in my head to run all the way around that mountain using the foothills which would be about 32 miles. My first attempt was aborted at 24 miles because I ran out of time, but a week later I accomplished the deed. Surely I was the first person to ever run around that mountain because of the distance and because it is just spectacular view of Utah Lake the remote valley with very little civilization. The mountain towers above it all. After finishing, I just gazed at the mountain and was amazed that I had really accomplished the feat. As of 2016, I have run around that



a silly thing to do. The east side has a entire time and the east side is in an expansive,

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mountain more than fifteen times. A few times I've invited others to come with me, introducing them to ultra-distance for the first time.

In later years, some of my runs around the mountain would be very long loops. The above run was a 44-mile run in 2013. This one caused another stress fracture in my tibia because of all the pavement running on the east and north.

Mount Timpanogos – May 30, 2006 – 38 miles

As of 2016, I've been on the summit of 11,749-foot Mount Timpanogos in Utah 80 times, but one day I also ran around it. Trails exist all the way around the foothills of the mountain except for about an 8-mile stretch of paved roads. I wasn't at all familiar with these trails so this was truly an adventure. I started at 2:15 a.m. in Provo Canyon. I tried to take the Great Western Trail but very quickly lost it, so I used my GPS to get me on other trails to make my way around the eastern side, some down on the Bonneville Shoreline trail near the base of the mountain.

I came across groups of young adults camping and partying. One group asked who I was, and I just said, "I'm the green light guy." I didn't try to explain what I was doing because they wouldn't believe me. Much of my navigation was a comedy of errors because I didn't know the trails, but I used the Dry Creek trail and eventually made it up to the Great Western Trail where the entire area was buried in deep snow. Using my GPS I linked up with the Timpooneke Road and finally was able to make better progress. I made my way around the north side of the mountain, reached the Timpooneke trailhead and was in much more familiar territory.

As I was heading down the trail near the Alpine Loop road, I ran into my mentor, Phil Lowry who had been running but stopped to do a little adhoc trail work to keep the runoff away from the trail. He had just completed his first Timp summit of the year using mountaineering gear. The rest of my loop was mostly downhill and pretty uneventful. I finished up on the Provo River Parkway, a paved trail that runs down Provo Canyon along the river. I finally reached my car and completed my long 38-mile loop in a slow 10.5 hours, taking many, many wrong turns. But it had been a great adventure. I experienced beautiful forests, basins, creeks, raging rivers, cliffs, snow-covered peaks, early spring wildflowers, aspens with new leaves, and snow-covered trails. I saw it all in one morning!



Landrock – Apr 13, 2009 – 26.2 miles

Behind my house is a hill called Landrock (also called Rattlesnake Ridge). Around the ridge is an old dirt road loop of about 1.035 miles. I got the wild idea to get up early one morning before work to run loops around the ridge, enough for a marathon. The loops were fairly smooth except a rocky section where some new development was dumping rocks. The entire loop has about a 50-foot elevation climb/descent. The loop road is about 250 feet above the Utah Lake shore below, so I got some great views along the way. I left my house at 1:30 a.m., and brought up some fluid and food. I decided I would alternate the direction of each loop which also helped me keep track of loop numbers. I worried about attracting attention up there in the middle of the night with my bright green flashlight and I tried to hide its beam from the police station nearby. I ran the first 12 miles almost entirely by moon light. By 5 a.m. I could see the homes below lighting up as people woke up for the day. I soon finished in 4:17:47. Not bad for a marathon before work. I enjoyed this so much that I repeated it a couple more times on other days.



Schofield Lake – July 11, 2009 – 18 miles

I found myself at scout camp with my son at Scofield, Utah. One morning I got up very early and quietly left camp. I was working on three hours of sleep but looked forward to a long run around Scofield Lake. I first needed to run about eight miles of pavement to the town of Scofield. Only four cars passed me. Scofield was still very much asleep even though it was 5:15 a.m. On the east side, I finally reached a dirt road and several fishermen drove by. To finish my run, I had to zig-zag up some roads and then decided to save a mile by doing a short bushwhack directly toward the scout camp. I descended a steep slope and then quickly connected to a trail the scouts had pounded out with their feet in a grove of trees where they did wilderness survival a couple nights earlier. I ran past the rifle range and waved at the camp staff who were all picking up trash in an open field. It had been a great run and certainly a good activity when you have to go to scout camp.



Utah Lake – October 15, 2012 – 82 miles

I started running about 2 a.m. and ran counter-clockwise all the way around massive Utah Lake, an 82-mile adventure run. About 3/4ths was rural country. Many cyclists do this every year, but I'm the first to do it on foot in a day.

The first 26 miles were in the dark. These were some very straight miles on the west of Utah Lake. I could look south and see the lights of Elberta and Goshen 20 miles away. It really messed with my mind. I watched the highway mile markers ticking down, 17, 16, etc. Mentally I had a rough time with those first 30 miles. It was very cold, dark, and lonely. I had decided to turn back several times. At mile 24.5 I concluded I would turn around at the 25-mile mark to make the run and even 50 and be home by noon. But for some reason at the 25-mile mark, I just kept running forward. By mile 30, after all that investment, I knew I should just keep going. When I arrived into a small town, I would stop and use a convenient store as my aid station.

On the east side, there are no direct routes like there were on the west. I ran some railroad tracks to reduce miles but it didn't help reduce the time. It really took some good navigation to minimize the miles. I found some creative routes which made it even more fun. The sun when down and I just grinded out the final hours. My last few miles near the lake in Saratoga Springs were nice and quiet. I was glad to finish and it felt like I really accomplished something pretty amazing.

This [video](#) tells the whole story.

I enjoyed this run so much that I [repeated it](#) on December 5, 2015. I again started very early, a little before 1:00 a.m. This time I didn't run any railroad tracks and went through old Spanish Fork downtown. My route was 84 miles yet I did it faster, in 19:28. As I finished in the dark, I gazed across the massive lake with lights flickering miles away and thought about all the miles I covered to run around it. I actually couldn't comprehend it. It didn't seem possible, but I did it again.



Sanpitch Mountains – November 23, 2012 – DNF – 65 miles

I did a very crazy Black Friday run. I attempted to run around the San Pitch mountain range, about 97 miles. These are the mountains to the west of Sanpete Valley where the city of Manti sits. You can also see them as you travel down I-15. They are to the east as you drive south of Nephi. I started at the little town of Levan, about 12 miles south of Nephi, at 1 a.m. I ran thirty very cold and dark miles south to the little town of Gunnison. It was a terrible mental exercise to hang in there and not turn around. I seriously almost turned back three times. My water bottles with warm diluted Ensure turned to ice cream, not a great treat when you are so cold already. At dawn I had new life. I ran around the south end of the range and made then started running north through Sanpete Valley, reaching Manti and



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Ephraim. I had to give up the adventure at mile 65, at Moroni, for two reasons: 1. My knee stiffened up pretty badly. 2. The road from Ephraim to Nephi has an unsafe narrow shoulder and cars flew by at 70 mph. I was on pins and needles for the ten miles.

This [video](#) tells the whole story:

Brown Duck Mountain – July 3, 2013 – 35 miles

Brown Duck Mountain is a high mountain on the south slope of the Uintas mountain range in Utah. I was interested in trying something new and decided to go run the Brown Duck Mountain Loop. The trailhead is north of the towns of Duchesne and Mountain Home, at Moon Lake. It was an easy drive, 2:45 from my home, all on pavement. I arrived about 11 p.m. and slept in the car. I woke up at 4 a.m. to get ready, but there was a big windstorm going through with a little rain. I had no desire to run in terrible wind, so I went back to sleep and waited until 7 a.m. For the rest of the day the weather was great.



The rain from the previous day and night was nice because the trail was soft and not very dusty. It took several miles to reach the loop and then I ran counter-clockwise around the mountain. The views were fantastic and the forest runs were great fun. This [video](#) tells the whole story.

Mount Nebo – October 13, 2013 – 47 miles

For years, I had wondered if it was possible to run all the way around Mount Nebo, the highest mountain in the Wasatch Front. After a couple visits to the mountain, I noticed many trails and eventually figured out a route. This would truly be an adventure run because I had never run on any of these trails before.

I started before dawn and made a massive climb up Pole Canyon on the northwest end of the mountain above the town of Mona. I hit some deep snow but trudged on and connected with trails that ran down the east side of the mountain. My big trouble was on the southern end. I just couldn't find the trails I had planned to run on and made wrong turns, but eventually made my way to the city of Nephi. From there it was mostly a frontage road run on the west side all the way back to Mona and my car. If I had found the right routes, the mileage



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around the mountain would be less than 40 miles. I'm sure I'm the first person to run around Mount Nebo. This [video](#) tells the whole story

South Oquirrh Mountains – November 30, 2013 – 62 miles

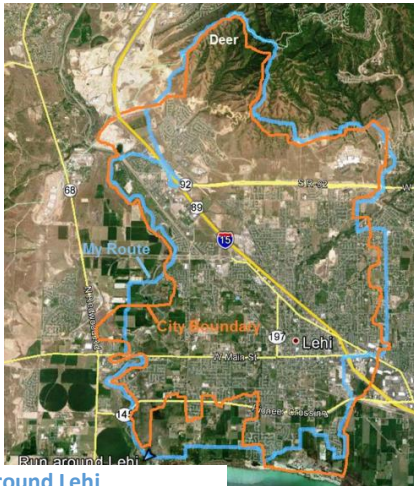
I accomplished my 4th 100K+ training run in 22 days, for a big mileage month of 441 miles. I started at 2:00 a.m. in the little town of Cedar Fort, and ran clockwise around the southern portion of the Oquirrh Mountains. Dawn came around mile 23 on the west side of the mountains. I reached the city of Tooele and then ran up Middle Canyon to the top of Butterfield Canyon. There was some early season snow in the higher country. I then made my way on familiar trails above Herriman, behind Camp Williams and back to Cedar Fort.

This [video](#) tells the whole story:



City Boundary Runs – Winter of 2014-2015

In 2014 to keep my motivation for running high during the winter, I hatched the idea to run around the borders of my city, Saratoga Springs. This required careful research and planning to try to follow the boundaries as close as possible without too much crossing over private property. Many of the boundaries cross across rural grazing lands, so in those cases I tried to keep the city property inside my large loop. It turned out to be great fun and a navigation challenge. The run around Saratoga Springs turned out to be 38.7 miles.



Run around Lehi

Next, I ran around the city boundaries of Lehi, Utah. The boundaries were even more difficult to navigate. On the northern end I had to climb up and run high ridges with snow and hundreds of deer. The east side was urban running but all the streets change names on the boundaries so it was a fun game to figure out the right route. This run was 33 miles.

Finally, I ran around the city of American Fork, Utah for 20 miles. All the city boundary runs introduced me to roads and trails I had never been on before and there was plenty to see and experience. It made winter running interesting.

Onaqui Mountains – March 12, 2016 – 48 miles

The Onaqui Mountains are in the west desert of Utah. These mountains lie south of the Stansbury Mountains (Deseret Peak) and north of the Pony Express Trail. I began my run around the mountain range at 1:44 a.m. about two miles east of Lookout Pass on the historic Pony Express route. It was about 47 degrees out, warm for this time of year. All was quiet as I ran up and over Lookout Pass and by the starting location of my Pony Express Trail 50 and 100. After four miles I turned north, running on a dirt road all the way to the little town of Terra. I could see the faint lights of Dugway ten miles off to the northwest as I ran north.



As I ran by the ranches near Terra, I woke up all the dogs who cheered me on. From there I ran on the paved road up and over Johnson Pass where I was greeted by the sunrise. After passing through the little town of Clover, I headed south on the east side of the mountain range using a series of dirt roads, wild horse trails, and just bushwhacking at times to complete my loop all the way around the range.