

Snow not altering Western States 100 run

By Sam McManis, Sacramento Bee

When it comes to traversing difficult snow-impacted terrain, man apparently has an advantage over horse.

At least, that's a conclusion that could be drawn from Western States 100 Mile Endurance Run race director Greg Soderlund, who has confirmed that the annual ultrarunning race on June 25 will be run despite snow conditions in Tahoe and Sierra that last week forced officials from the Tevis Cup – the 100 mile endurance horse race later in the summer contested over the same Squaw Valley-to-Auburn trails – to move its race to October.

“People can get over the snow,” Soderlund said. “What's got people's attention is Tevis' postponement, but horses can't post through all that snow. Well, I guess they can, but it would really damage the horse. We (humans) can climb over logs and go through debris that horses can't. We're pretty impervious to it.”

In the past week, since the Tevis Cup postponement, Soderlund said “rumors and speculation” swirled that Western States might be canceled as well. Considered the nation's most prestigious ultramarathon, Western States has only been canceled once – in 2008, due to fires in the Sierra. Soderlund said there actually has been more snow in the hills for the 1983 and 1995 races, which were contested on slightly altered courses to accommodate the drifts.

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