

For immediate release

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Hudson Recruiter Races in Sahara to Promote Work-Life Balance

Hudson Sponsors Matthew Chapman in Sahara Race

HONG KONG –1 September 2005 – What has a gruelling 250-km ultramarathon to do with work-life balance?

A lot, according to Matthew Chapman, a Singapore-based recruitment consultant with Hudson who took time off from work to run two 250-km ultramarathons within 12 months and is presently preparing for his third race.

“It is important to strike a good balance between working hard and playing hard; being able to pursue your own passions will also help to enhance your work performance,” says Chapman.

So, barely four months after his successful race in the Gobi Desert, Chapman is attempting the third leg of the Racing the Planet “Four Desert Series”, this time across the Sahara Desert in Western Egypt, from 24 September to 1 October 2005.

A 29-year-old Australian, Chapman’s participation will be sponsored by Hudson, as were his previous two ultramarathons.

Stefanie Cross-Wilson, Country Manager of Hudson in Singapore, says, “We support Matthew in his quest for work-life balance. Work-life balance is something that Hudson fundamentally encourages and promotes.”

“As part of our workplace health efforts, many of our employees annually participate in charity runs and marathons. In fact, half of our office ran in this year’s JP Morgan Chase Corporate Challenge in Singapore; about another 10 colleagues will take up the challenge of a full marathon in December.”

Cross-Wilson explains, “We believe there is a strong correlation between staying healthy and being able to climb the corporate ladder. A healthy work-life balance can lead to increased productivity and morale, lower job-related stress and lower turnover.”

In the “Four Desert Series” Chapman has completed the first two of the four desert ultramarathons, consisting of the 250-km Atacama Crossing in Chile and the 250-km Gobi March in China. He came in fifth (out of 76 individual competitors) in Chile and was placed fourth (out of 92 individual competitors) in China.

Now, as part of an elite group of 27 extreme sports competitors competing in their third “Four Deserts” race, if Matthew completes the Sahara Race, he will become part of an even smaller group qualified to enter the last race called “The Last Desert,” to be held in 2006.

Similar to the earlier ultramarathons, the seven-day Sahara Race will be 250 km in length and will involve six arduous stages of between 20 km and 80 km per stage.

Competitors have to make their way each day to the end of the stage, typically to the campsite, where they can rest until the start of the next stage the following morning. There is also one 80-km stage held over two days during which competitors continue the race through the night guided by glow sticks. The race will culminate at the magnificent ancient pyramids outside Cairo.



What makes the Sahara race unique is that it will take place in the hottest desert in the world. The race will follow a marked course around the Bahariya and Farafra Oases in the Black and White Deserts. It will also be the first-ever international sporting event to take place in this virtually untouched part of the Sahara.

What sets this extreme sports event apart from other races is that competitors will have to be almost totally self-sufficient throughout the entire event. All competitors must carry all their equipment and food for the six days with the only luxuries in the form of a nine-litre daily water ration, a sleeping tent and a campfire for warmth.

Competitors will brave temperatures of up to 50°C and will cross a land of rocky mountains and complex sand dunes. A total of 103 competitors from 24 countries will be participating in the Sahara Race. Most of the competitors are key executives of Fortune 500 companies, lawyers, investment bankers, actors and avid athletes.

Chapman's training regime involves running two hours per day after work, with a backpack of rice weighing eight kilogrammes to simulate the weight of the pack that he will be carrying in the dry and hot Sahara desert.

Chapman is determined to complete this third leg of the "Four Desert Series" to gain exclusive entry into the last race, which is an epic Antarctica expedition.

He explains, "In the course of my work interaction with key executives and hiring managers, I have found that the most productive and successful company executives are those who manage to strike a healthy balance between excelling at work and after-work activities."

So when Chapman is not racing, he continues to advocate that the best corporations to work for are those that encourage sustainable work performance and life's other pursuits. He has spoken in public luncheons and seminars, the most recent was the CEO Luncheon organised by the Work-Life Unit of the Singapore Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports during the inaugural Work-Life Harmony Week. He spoke to more than 100 CEOs on the importance of work-life balance and shared insights on how he balances a successful recruiting career and his running pursuits. In September, he will also be speaking at the Singapore American School's Speech Day, to its 1,000-strong high school cohort on adopting a healthy lifestyle.

Event Factsheet – Sahara Race

Event:	Sahara Race, Western Egypt
Start/Finish:	25 September – 1 October 2005
Race makeup:	6 Stages – 30km, 40km, 30km, 80km, 42km, 16km (Total 250km)
Participants:	103 competitors from 24 countries
Age range of competitors:	23 – 70
Daily temperature range:	-10 °C (overnight) to 35 °C during day
Expected calories burned per day:	3,500 to 6,000
Expected pack weight:	12kg – 18kg

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