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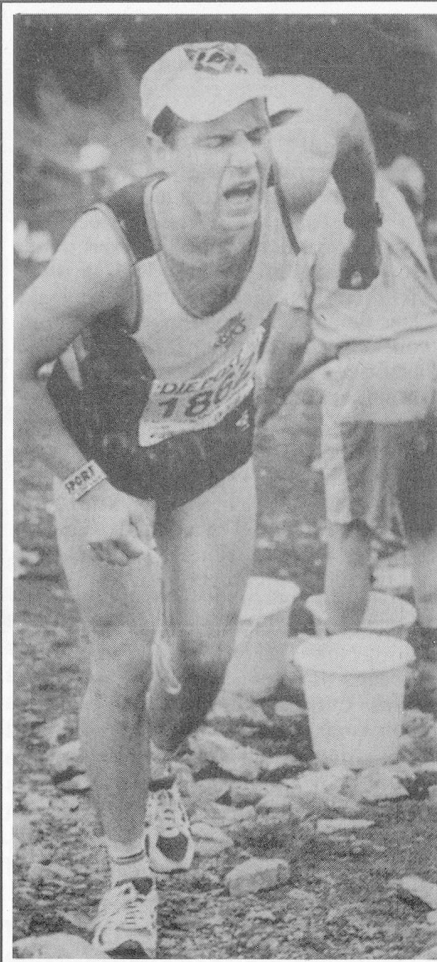
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SWISS ALPINE MARATHON

Tougher than the traditional marathon, though even than a full triathlon, the Swiss Alpine Marathon is considered as the country's most demanding sports venue. Some people even consider it as bordering on insanity.

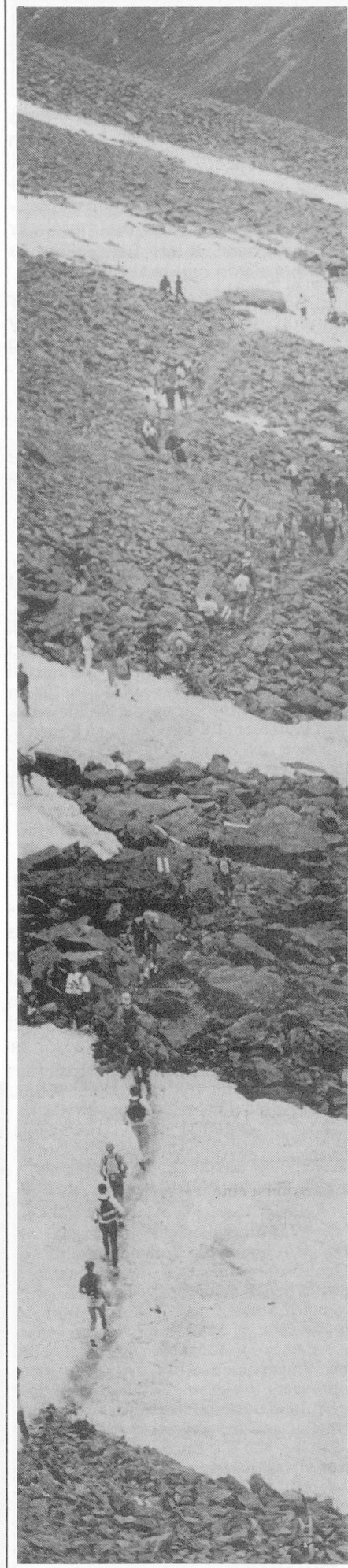
Invented by Andrea Tuffli from Chur, the Swiss Alpine Marathon, quickly nicknamed the "Lauf der Spinner" has attracted over 1650 participants in 1995. It is 67 km long and takes participants from the start in Davos over rocks and ice, through snow and alpine torrents, up and down the mountains, reaching 2750 m at its highest point at the Sertigpass. At that point, many participants run out of steam, overcome by exhaustion and lack of oxygen. To avoid any possible accidents, the organisers set up a medical check-up point at the top of the Sertigpass. Every runner must stop there for a few minutes to undergo a physical check-up by qualified doctors before they are allowed to carry on with the marathon. Those momentarily unfit to continue can rest for a while in specially erected army tents until the doctors find them fit again to run the rest of the marathon.

The all time record for the Swiss Alpine Marathon stands at 5 hours 32 minutes and 35 seconds. It was all it took the champion to cover these 67 km with an overall difference in altitude of over 2300 m. On the other hand, some participants take up to 12 hours and more to complete the course not counting those who never made it to the end of the run.



The marathon's "torture" clearly shows on the face of this participant who still maintained afterwards that he enjoyed it. He must be a sucker for punishment.

A friendly pat on the shoulder to keep you going. ▼



Running down from the Sertigpass towards Chelinalp and Boden.