

ASPEN TIMES WEEKLY

Volume 130 | Issue Number 32 | Sunday, August 9, 2009 | Free



The run of her life

Megan Lund hits her professional stride

Inside | When notes become literature 18 | Magic man 25



DAVID CLIFFORD/DAVIDCLIFFORDPHOTOGRAPHY.COM

Megan Lund on the Scout Trail in Glenwood Springs in June.

Mountain runner

Basalt's Megan Lund aims for the top

Jon Maletz
Aspen Times Weekly

Don't sprain your ankle. Don't get caught.

The words raced through Basalt runner Megan Lund's head as, with heart pounding and legs and lungs burning, she propelled her spindle-thin 102-pound frame toward the finish line in the 8-kilometer Cheyenne Cañon Mountain Race on July 26 in Colorado Springs.

For more than 30 minutes, she and a group of elite mountain runners jockeyed for position. Lund surged to the front of the lead pack on the opening climb, plowing through bushes and

brush adjacent to the trail to make headway on the narrow patch of singletrack. On the ensuing downhill, however, three competitors breezed by her.

Lund was determined not to let the trio out her sight. She accomplished that feat, and even made up ground to snag third place during the early stages of the second loop.

That was not good enough. Only the top two finishers would earn spots on the U.S. Mountain Running Team, one of the 25-year-old's goals.

Lund, competing in just her third event on the mountain running circuit, summoned the energy

for one last pass.

"I joked to a friend [before the race] that I might sleep in ..." Lund says, flashing a smile as bright as sun-drenched snow during a recent conversation at an Aspen coffee shop. "There's so much stress and anxiety on race day.

"Why do I put myself through this?"

The answer is simple: Lund was born for moments like this.

Running is infused in her DNA — her father Ron competed in his first marathon in seventh grade and coaches the Basalt High School cross-country team. Her mother, Kaye and sisters Whitney