

Golden, British Columbia — The Golden Ultra kicked off Friday afternoon with its signature vertical stage, setting the tone for one of Canada's most distinctive trail running festivals. Over three days, runners from across the country and beyond tackle a sequence of challenges that test climbing power, endurance, and recovery — all while the town of Golden transforms into a vibrant hub of trail culture.

### A Stage Race Like No Other in Canada

The Golden Ultra offers two main multi-day formats: Full Pint: Friday's vertical climb (2.9 miles, 4.6 km, +3,488 ft / +1,063 m), Saturday's long stage (36 miles, 58 km, +7,600 ft / +2,322 m), and Sunday's final loop (9.4 miles, 15.2 km, +1,520 ft / +463 m). Half Pint: shorter but still demanding, with 1.8 miles (2.9 km) on Friday, 18 miles (29 km) on Saturday, and 6.9 miles (11.1 km) on Sunday.

This format — known locally as “Blood, Sweat and Tears” — highlights three distinct skill sets: explosive climbing, sustained endurance, and the ability to recover and push again on tired legs. The event also offers one-day entries, helping it reach its cap of roughly 600 runners each year.

### Day 1: A Brutal Climb to Start

Friday's “Blood & Climb” is short but ferocious: a vertical route gaining more than 3,000 ft (1,000 m) in under three miles. Heat and dry conditions on the ridges made the climb even more demanding, and many runners spoke of how hard it was to manage hydration despite the brief distance.

Behind the race, a small army of over 70 volunteers and a dedicated medical team ensured smooth operations, reflecting the event's strong community roots.

### Results: Vertical Stage

In the men's field, Alberta's Adam Mertens (Canmore, Arc'teryx Alberta) took the win in 51:06, followed by Adam Zelenka (Kelowna, BC) in 52:43 and Everett Craig (Revelstoke, BC) in 52:50. Oliver Murray (Canmore) placed fourth in 54:43, with Thomas Jefferson (Golden, BC) rounding out the top five in 56:57.

On the women's side, Frederica Blouin-Comeau (Canmore, AB) was the only runner under the hour, finishing in 59:53. Kara Folkerts (Lacombe, AB) was second in 1:01:03, followed by Lauren Cantwell (Golden, BC) in 1:01:57. Robyn Thomas (Revelstoke, BC) finished fourth in 1:02:20, and Caroline Therrien (Chelsea, QC) completed the top five in 1:05:37.

The vertical stage is always spectacular, but it rarely decides the overall standings. Traditionally, Saturday's long stage reshuffles the general classification and determines the eventual winners.

### The Decisive Stage: 36 Miles of Effort

Saturday brings the “Sweat/Conquer”, the centerpiece of the Golden Ultra. The Full Pint runners face 36 miles (58 km) and more than 7,600 ft (2,322 m) of climbing, including extended ridge sections of more than 9 miles (15 km).

Aid stations are widely spaced (around 7, 15, 21, and 29 miles), demanding careful planning. Mandatory gear includes warm clothing, a survival blanket, hydration system, and a phone. Bear spray is optional but recommended — a uniquely Canadian touch.

This stage is often where the Golden Ultra is won or lost. Gaps taken here are almost never closed on Sunday.

## Following the Race

There's no GPS live tracking at the Golden Ultra. Instead, official results are posted after each stage on Zone4, Canada's go-to timing platform. The race website provides maps, schedules, and practical info for runners and spectators.

On Sunday, the festival wraps up with the "Tears & Cruise" — a 9.4-mile (15.2 km) loop for Full Pint and 6.9 miles (11.1 km) for Half Pint runners — followed by the awards ceremony at noon.

## More Than a Race: A Community Effort

The Golden Ultra thrives thanks to its volunteers and community partners. Local groups like the Golden Cycling Club and Special Olympics Golden receive support from the event, while local hotels and restaurants see a surge in visitors. For Golden, this is as much a celebration of mountain life as it is a competition.

## Quick Recap

Day 1 (Blood & Climb): wins for Adam Mertens and Frederica Blouin-Comeau. Day 2 (Sweat/Conquer): the decisive 36-mile stage underway. Day 3 (Tears & Cruise): short loop and final standings on Sunday. Follow: results posted after each stage on Zone4.