

SPORTS

FROM JUNGLE TO ICEBOX
BRAZILIAN PREPARES FOR ARROWHEAD 135

BY KEVIN BONESKE
Sports Editor

A two-time winner of an ultramarathon through the Amazon rainforest has traveled from her native Brazil to International Falls where she is now training for the Arrowhead 135.

Carla Goulart is seeking to become the first South American woman to complete the 135 miles within 60 hours Jan. 27-29 along the Arrowhead State Trail from International Falls to the Fortune Bay Casino.

She had entered last year's ultramarathon, in which several inches of snow fell while the event was in progress, but wasn't among the seven runners who finished when she ended up dropping out near the Elephant Lake checkpoint. That was her first experience competing in the snow.

Goulart was the top female twice in the Jungle Marathon, a 254-kilometer race over seven days in the heat and humidity of the Brazilian jungle with swamp and river crossings. She arrived in the Falls early last month to train in the wintry weather.

She doesn't speak English and has been staying in the Falls area with Berenice Alves, who is fluent in Portuguese and able to interpret for Goulart. Alves noted she has lived in the Falls area for six years and works at the air-

port for the Transportation Security Administration.

"We actually had a mutual friend and he had come before here to run," said Alves. "(Goulart) always had (an) interest to come and run the (Arrowhead) 135.

"So we became friends on Facebook and we started talking and she said, 'I really want to come there.' And I said, 'If you're going to come, you're going to stay with me.'"

In addition to Goulart being able to stay with someone in the Falls who speaks Portuguese, Alves lives next to the trail where the Arrowhead 135 takes place and Goulart is able to train.

Goulart, 37, is a part-time nurse and spends much of her time training for ultramarathons.

"She's constantly training or constantly going to some kind of event," Alves said. "So she's works as much as she can and takes time off and goes to marathons."

Goulart, who began running at age 12 and excelled in the sport in her teen years, running 3- and 6-mile races, now works with a trainer and looks forward to the challenge of an ultramarathon.

"Every marathon she would run and win, she would get more excited (with) the challenge of a new (race)," Alves said.

In preparation for the 2013 Arrowhead 135, Goulart had

arrived in the Falls only 10 days before the race.

"I honestly don't think it was enough time to get used to this weather itself," Alves said. "I think she would have done much better if it were not for that (deep) snow."

In preparation for this year's race, Goulart began her training in Brazil by simulating cold-weather and snowy conditions.

"It's almost like (she used) a meat freezer and she would go inside and do exercises," Alves said. "There is one training (exercise) that she did where they would have sand and she has to do all this jumping on the sand, because it's supposed to imitate the snow."

In addition, Alves said Goulart also pulled tires behind her to simulate the load of the survival equipment she is required to have with her while in the Arrowhead 135.

Goulart's preparation in the Falls is including the proper clothing to wear, depending upon what the weather conditions might be later this month during the ultramarathon.

"Depending on the temperature, you don't want to sweat but you don't want to get too cold," Alves said. "If you're sweating, then you get wet, and that can cause so many problems."

To get used to running outside in the cold weather, Goulart also participated in

last month's Reindeer Run and entered today's Freeze Yer Gizzard Blizzard Run.

When asked how competing in the Jungle Marathon compares to the Arrowhead 135, Goulart noted everything is planned differently.

For instance, she said there is nearly 100 percent humidity in the jungle where the runners are constantly wet, which is not a concern in the heat and humidity, in contrast to not wanting to get wet in the cold weather of northern Minnesota.

Goulart was able to carry all her gear for the Jungle Marathon in a backpack, compared to the runners in the Arrowhead 135 loading up their gear on sleds.

Given the unpredictability of the weather for northern Minnesota in late January, Goulart said it takes more planning for the Arrowhead 135 than running in the Brazilian jungle.

"She thinks it's easier to run in the heat - of course, she grew up in the heat - but she said it's easy to figure out (when) you're running and you're sweaty," Alves said. "All you've got to do is go to a river - just plunk in and you'll feel refreshed."

"Over here if you're cold, and you didn't bring enough clothes, you're out of luck.... Over here there is frostbite. You cannot run from that."

The scenery along the Arrowhead 135 route is a



STAFF PHOTO BY KEVIN BONESKE

Brazilian Carla Goulart pushes a sled outside in the Falls area last week in preparation for the Arrowhead 135. Goulart is hoping to become the first South American woman to finish the ultramarathon.

constant white and gray in color, Goulart said, in contrast to all the different colors she has encountered in the jungle.

Goulart said she believes the Arrowhead 135 is one of the world's toughest ultramarathons. To successfully complete the race this year, she noted she has three options in mind as to how she might finish in 60 hours.

"She thinks she could make it into Elephant Lake (23 hours after the race begins), which would be fantastic....," Alves said. "She thinks she could try not to

sleep (after arriving at the Elephant Lake checkpoint), but it all depends on how tired she feels."

Goulart said her main goal is to finish the race sometime before the final cutoff time, though she would like to reach the Fortune Bay Casino in less than 50 after the ultramarathon begins.

Following the Arrowhead 135, Goulart plans to compete in other ultramarathons this year and hopes a successful finish later this month will help qualify her for an ultramarathon next year in Alaska.

Vikings announce Mike Zimmer as new head coach

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Mike Zimmer is finally a head coach in the NFL. The Minnesota Vikings think now is the time for the veteran defensive coordinator.

"I'm extremely excited to bring a championship to the state of Minnesota and to the great fan base of the Vikings," Zimmer said in a video posted on the team's Twitter account. "I can't wait to get to work."

Long after reports first surfaced about the hire, the Vikings remained quiet. Their silence was strange, considering a report by ESPN that they had already requested and received permission from Cleveland to interview offensive coordinator Norv Turner for the same position in Minnesota. Finally, the Vikings made the announcement shortly after 9 p.m. local time. Zimmer will be the ninth coach in the franchise's 54 seasons.

"Fans will appreciate

Mike's intensity on the field and his down-to-earth attitude off the field," Vikings owner Mark Wilf said. "We strongly believe he will help us compete for division championships each year and lead us to our ultimate goal of bringing a Super Bowl championship to Minnesota."

Tight end Kyle Rudolph, center John Sullivan and defensive end Brian Robison were among the players who expressed excitement about the former Bengals assistant via their Twitter accounts. "Fired up about Coach Zimmer! As a Cincy kid he's been fun to watch there and can't wait to work with him!" Rudolph tweeted.

For the Bengals, the news



Mike Zimmer

was bittersweet. Zimmer, who has been an NFL defensive coordinator for the last 14 seasons, spent six of those with Cincinnati.

"Today is one of the happiest and yet saddest days for me. Happy Coach Zimm finally gets to be a head coach and spread all of his knowledge," cornerback Terence Newman tweeted.

The Bengals were third in the league in yards allowed and fifth in points against this season, though they lost in the first round of the playoffs for the third straight year.

"Gonna miss you coach Zimmer! Wish you nothing but the best in Minnesota. You brought out the best in each of your players! So honored to have been coached by you!" tweeted linebacker Rey Mauluga.

Zimmer replaces Leslie Frazier, another former Bengals defensive coordinator who was fired Dec. 30 after

the team finished 5-10-1 this season.

General manager Rick Spielman interviewed at least seven candidates. He and Vikings owners Zygi Wilf and Mark Wilf settled on the one who was widely considered around the league to be the most overdue for a head coaching job. Zimmer has interviewed for several vacancies in recent years, including this month with Tennessee.

The 57-year-old Zimmer played at Illinois State and spent 14 seasons coaching in the college ranks before being hired in 1994 as an assistant with Dallas. He got a Super Bowl ring the following season as defensive backs coach.

Then he became defensive coordinator of the Cowboys in 2000 and spent seven seasons at that post, the last four under coach Bill Parcells. Zimmer led defenses in Dallas that operated in both

the 4-3 and 3-4 alignments, including the 2003 group that surrendered the fewest yards in the league.

The Wilfs, natives of New Jersey, grew up as New York Giants fans and are admirers of Parcells from his days coaching that team.

After one tumultuous year as the defensive coordinator for Atlanta, when Falcons coach Bobby Petrino quit midseason in 2007, Zimmer went to Cincinnati to work for coach Marvin Lewis. In 2009, when his wife, Vikki, unexpectedly died, Zimmer was named the winner of several NFL assistant coach of the year awards.

Zimmer has a fiery personality, as evidenced by his profanity-laced appearances on HBO's "Hard Knocks," which featured the Bengals in 2009 and 2013. That overt intensity is a contrast to Frazier, who went 21-33-1 in three-plus seasons with one appearance in the playoffs.

Frazier was a popular figure in the locker room and throughout the organization, but as a former defensive coach his area of expertise became the team's biggest downfall. Despite a carousel at quarterback, the aged, injury-depleted defense was mostly responsible for the sorry showing this season. The Vikings allowed an average of 30 points per game, the most in the league, and 397.8 yards per game, the second-most.

Five of the seven reported candidates who interviewed for the vacancy had defensive backgrounds: Seattle defensive coordinator Dan Quinn, Cleveland defensive coordinator Ray Horton, Arizona defensive coordinator Todd Bowles, San Francisco defensive line coach Jim Tomsula and Zimmer. The other two were offensive coordinators: Seattle's Darrell Bevell and San Francisco's Greg Roman.

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