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Motivation of participants in adventure ultramarathons compared to other foot races

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Several studies have shown differences between marathon and ultramarathon runners with respect to the motives for participation. In this study we compared the motives for participation of a sample of adventure ultramarathon, ultramarathon and marathon runners. The adventure ultramarathon group consisted of participants of the Marathon des Sables (MdS), a desert marathon comprising 6 stages with a total length of 230 km. Subjects had to verbally state the reasons for participation in the respective races. These motives were categorized into the scales of the MOMS (Motivation of Marathoners Scales) or one of four additional reasons. The results revealed significant differences between the three groups of runners indicating less importance of the reason COMPETITION but higher importance of the motives NATURE and LIFE MEANING for MdS participants compared to marathon runners.

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