



MONTANA CUP

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2004 Montana Cup Hall of Fame

Nicole Hunt (formerly Nicole Murray)

Nicole Hunt's family moved a lot when she was young, including several stops in Montana. They lived mostly along *Interstate Highway 90* between Seattle and Chicago. One Spokane-area home allowed Hunt the opportunity to run her first race at *Bloomsday* in 1982. The furthest her family lived away from I-90 was Kalispell, and that is where Hunt realized that she loved to run.



Butte's Nicole Hunt at start of 2004 Montana Cup in Great Falls.

As a ninth-grader at Flathead Junior High, Hunt was thrilled when she broke the six-minute barrier for 1600 meters. Unfortunately, it was then that her family moved to Chicago. Hunt enrolled in a Chicago-area high school that did not sponsor a cross-country team, and that did not even have a running track. She described her years in Illinois as being very depressing. Her running dreams became trapped inside her with no release.

Hunt worked as a nanny in Europe for a year after high school, before returning to Illinois to start college. Again, Hunt's school did not offer running sports, and so she turned to running local road races as a self-described "jogger". The sub-twenty-minute 5K became Hunt's first real running goal, and she struggled for two years without achieving it.

Nicole Hunt (left) celebrating 2006 Cup victory with teammate, Vaia Errett



That is when Hunt's life took an upturn. Her family returned to Missoula and she matriculated at the University of Montana. She subscribed to *Runners' World Magazine* and began teaching herself how to run fast. Hunt "walked onto" the 1992 Grizzly track team, and she earned a scholarship there when she blazed 5000 meters in 18:01.

Hunt volunteered to work on the finish line crew at the very first Montana Cup in 1992. Continuing her migration along I-90, Hunt missed the 1993 Cup after moving to Bozeman to attend Montana State University's School of Nursing. She also joined the Cats' cross-country team, and continued to blossom as a runner.

In 1994 (Cup victors) and 1995, Hunt competed for Missoula's Cup team while she started her nursing career. 1996 found Hunt working near, and running for Butte. Another job/team change came the next year when Hunt organized her first Cup team for Bozeman. Hunt also claimed her first of six individual Cup victories that year. She was part of Bozeman's 1999 winning Cup team. 2000 brought another brief move to Spokane and then back to the Butte-area.

All told, the nomadic Hunt has won six individual and three team Cups in fourteen tries. Her three team titles were won while competing for three different city teams (Missoula '94; Bozeman '99; Butte '06). Hunt has set noteworthy PRs in other races (4:59 - mile; 15:52 - 5000 m; 33:24 - 10000 m; 2:40:39 - marathon). In 2006, Hunt lead team USA to a gold medal at the World Mountain Running Championships, which were held in Turkey. Hunt is now self-employed as an Internet based [running coach](#).



Bursa, Turkey

Team USA -- 2006 World Mountain Running Trophy.

Nicole Hunt on far right.

Nicole Hunt racing along the Missouri River in the 2004 MT Cup.



In her own words:

When asked if she feels a love for the Montana Cup, Hunt replied with mock hesitance, "If I had to say yes or no I would say... Yes. Of course I love the Montana Cup! It's the one local race that I know will have the fastest runners to compete against."

Nicole Hunt's Montana Cup History						
Year	Location	Ind. Place	Team Place (pts)	Ind. Place Masters	Masters' Team Place (pts)	Notes
2016	Bozeman	2	5 (102)	1	2 (38)	
2015	Helena	3	5 (113)	1	NS	
			3			

2014	Missoula	5	(66)	1	NS	
2013	Butte	22	4 (92)	4	3 (59)	
2012	Kalispell	5	5 (96)	1	NS	
2011	Great Falls	DNC	NA	NA	NA	36 weeks pregnant with twins
2010	Billings	3	2 (43)	1	NS	
2009	Bozeman	3	3 (80)	NA	NS	One of the first eight runners who got lost during race
2008	Helena	2	4 (66)	NA	NS	4 months post C-section
2007	Missoula	DFL	4 (90)	MA	2 (49)	Baby-stepped race due to hamstring injury
2006	Butte	1	1 (31)	NA	2 (32)	Co- Meet Director ; First team championship as a team organizer
2005	Kalispell	1	2 (47)	NA	2 (38)	Co-Organized Camp Waterloo to form Masters' Cup rules
2004	Great Falls	3	3 (63)	NA	NA	Charter member of Montana Cup HOF
2003	Billings	1	2 (33)	NA	NA	
2002	Bozeman	2	3 (74)	NA	NA	
2001	Helena	2	3 (62)	NA	NA	On Helena's committee to define Montana Cup Mission Statement
2000	Helena	DFL	3 (63)	NA	NA	Moved back to Butte region and started as Butte's team organizer; Walked race due to foot injury
1999	Butte	1	1 (25)	NA	NA	Bozeman team
1998	Butte	1	2 (37)	NA	NA	Bozeman team organizer
1997	Butte	1	2 (35)	NA	NA	Bozeman team organizer
1996	Butte	3	3 (61)	NA	NA	Butte team
1995	Missoula	3	Inc.	NA	NA	Missoula team
1994	Missoula	4	1 (20)	NA	NA	Missoula team