

## La Luz Trail Run – Were Runners Faster in the 1980s?

By Rodger Sack

Some one recently asked me why there were faster times in the past on the La Luz Trail Run, than those recorded in recent years and this caused me to wonder how my times from the early 1980s would compare to times from the race last year. I first ran the La Luz Trail Run in 1980 and repeated again in 1983 through 1985. In 1980 I was 33 years old and then again ran the race when I was 36 through 38 years old.

My finish-times for the above races were the following and my overall finish position in those races:

1980	1:56:58	142 <sup>nd</sup> Overall
1983	1:52:34	121 <sup>st</sup> Overall
1984	1:53:48	133 <sup>rd</sup> Overall
1985	2:07:00	Didn't write my overall finish in my log

In checking these times against the finish times last year (to see how these same times would have placed in 2006), I came up with the following:

1:56:58	48 <sup>th</sup>
1:52:34	31 <sup>st</sup>
1:53:48	41 <sup>st</sup>
2:07:00	86 <sup>th</sup> (I was sick the week before this race)

As you can see, there is a considerable difference in my overall place in the 1980s, when compared to where these same times would have placed me last year. I really have nothing to attribute this to, except that in the earlier 1980s there was more gravel on the trail going through the rockslide. When the “new” La Luz was built, there was a large amount of gravel hauled in to make the trail in the rockslide easier to run. Over the years, all of this nice gravel running surface has eroded away leaving the rocky (almost unrunnable) boulders for the runners to navigate. However, I am not sure if this alone would be enough to account for the differential. Probably will never know – maybe there were more hard-core runners back in the 80s (I obviously wasn't one of them, based on my overall finishing position).