

Noel's holiday is no picnic!

— *By Olivia Gilchrist* —

THE sun-drenched beaches of California hold little appeal for intrepid Dromara runner Noel Hanna whose forthcoming "holiday" in the Golden State was specifically scheduled to take in the 13th Annual Angeles Crest 100 mile endurance run.

Noel is quite familiar with pushing his body to the limits, having competed in the Himalayan 100 mile stage race last November.

However, on that occasion the 100 miles were run over five days. In California the aim is to complete the distance in under 33 hours.

The race begins at 5 am on Saturday, September 26 in Wrightwood and ends on Sunday afternoon in Johnson Field, not far from the Rose Bowl Stadium in Pasadena.

Some 170 runners from the USA, Canada, Japan, Mexico and NI will take part, running 100 miles of mountain trails within the Angeles national forest just north of LA.

POISON IVY

Not only will they have to counter fatigue and sore feet but they have also been warned to watch out for poison ivy, rattlesnakes and mountain



Noel Hanna.

lions.

The competitors will reach a height of 9,300 feet at the summit of Mount Baden-Powell which is considerably higher than the Mourne peaks Noel has been training on.

Then there is the problem with the high temperatures which the Northern Ireland summer has hardly prepared Noel for and he admits he was "looking for some good weather here over the summer".

MOTIVATION

He intends to travel to America a week in advance of the event to try to acclimatise and says that his motivation is to "compete in things other people here haven't done before".

After running 100 miles in 33 hours those sun-drenched Californian beaches might be quite appealing after all.