

Commentary Hrinda

I was so pleased that I could reach my goal of 100 miles and then having enough left to win the ultra. It truly has become the highlight of my running experiences. This was my third attempt at running a 100 miles at Sandy Bottom. I remembered some of the mistakes I had made in the previous ultra's and also how the last 50 can really zap you. Last year I went out fast and stayed on the lead loop until 50 but then fell apart and struggled to get 75. This year was different, I felt a lot better at 50 miles than previous ultras. This year I hit 50 miles in about 10 hours but felt great. I was surprised that I could still run with a lot less muscle fatigue then last year. This greatly encouraged me to keep on going even after the rain. My strategy was to run just enough during the early loops to reach a one loop/hour pace and also to be loose and have fun. Everything felt right except my continuing battle with plantar fasciitis, it had really flared up but found that aslow run felt better then walking.

The biggest challenge was the rain and keeping motivated and focused after getting soaked. It sprinkled for a few loops and then poured. I was out running along that drainage ditch when the rain and wind hit. I threw on my rain coat, which was waterproof not just a shell like a lot of other runners had. The rain was coming in horizontal which totally soaked me from the waist down. My headlamp lit up the rain and made seeing the trail difficult. Within a minute, the trail was flooded and turned into a swamp. I was drifting off into the woods and flopping into water holes. The trees were swaying so much that I thought I might have to dodge a falling branch. The creepy lightning flashed and blinded me.

After the deluge, the moon came out with the wind calming and lower temps. I didn't see any of the leaders after the rain which made me wonder if they had stopped or were taking a break. There were many puddles on the trail but they eventually drained enough so you could get around. A bunch of folks did not change their shoes, big mistake! I got on a pace of doing a slow one loop/hour but felt like I could still run. I started passing the runners in front of me during the a.m. hours. The race counters told me around 0400 I had a chance of winning because everyone was stopping. At 0600, I passed a 100 miles and the counters said I was in the lead with Chris trying to catch up. The last hour I did short runs out and back to the parking cones. I poured it on and was the only one still running, everyone else was walking. My competitor stopped and I was told I had outlasted everyone and had won! I kept running until 0700 because I felt great and knew that this was an unique feat for myself which I may never be able to duplicate.

What worked for me was going out slow and having support from friends and my family. A friend from work, Walt Bruce, knew I ran last year and decided to come out and try for 50. I ran with him for the first few hours going nice and easy. It sure was nice to get through a chunk of the early miles with friendly conversation and encouragement. Later in the day, Walt finished his 50 by walking the out and back to the parking cones with his wife and two kids. My oldest son, Josh, ran a loop with me in the early evening. After the rain, I had more support from my youngest son, daughter and her best friend who came out to walk a loop.

My wife brought me more food through the night and kept me going. My fuel intake was an assortment that included: chicken noodle soup, salted boiled potatoes, all sorts of chips, kettle

popcorn, beef jerky, Big Mac & fries, couple of slices of Papa John's, lots of water, Gatorade, PowerAde, Pepsi and coffee.

I had some new spandex gaiters that I had tested on a few training runs and found them to work. I also ran until the rain hit with a NB trail shoe that had a rock guard layer in the sole. It made the shoe a little stiffer and heavier but I didn't feel the rocks as much. The shoe's tongue is firmly stitched up the shoe, which prevented debris from entering the front part of the shoe. It seems to work because I didn't have any blistering or pebble problems. I did train hard for the ultra by racking up 50 to 70 miles per week that included longer but slower runs. It was different than my faster paced marathon training.

After the race, I went home, took a shower and made it to church. I teach Sunday school to middle school boys at Liberty Baptist which is just down the road. I told them that if their 50-year-old teacher can make it on time to class after doing 100, they have no excuse for being lazy.

The race has great significance, not just, because I ran the race in a manner to win, but also because I was able to remember and honor those in my life that were cut down by cancer. I want to thank George for his continually commitment for this event. The volunteer support was fabulous and so uplifting even after the little shower we had. I saw a lot of familiar faces from last year and hope to see them again next year.

In His Grip,
Glenn