

1st Annual Free State Trail Run, April 28, 2007

Runner's Race Reports

From Patrick Perry, Lee's Summit, MO:

This was the inaugural running of the Kansas Free State 100k (63-miles). Good race. Plenty of rocks, roots, hills, mud and scenery. Ben Holmes, race director,



Photo by Dick Ross, www.seekcrun.com

did an outstanding job. It was well marked and very organized like you would expect from a veteran ultra runner like Ben. I threw up at about 45-miles, I think due to heat, and lost one toe nail but otherwise everything went well. Good race. Now for the best part.....

I won!

Well not really, I won for my age division.....

Well, actually there was this woman from Colorado, in my age division, that beat me so I guess it's just the men in my age division that I beat.....

And there were some old guys that beat me. Technically that makes them not in my age division right?

I guess I should mention that there were only 16 runners signed up for the 100k

Hey, it's not about whether you win or lose right? Good race.

Gary Henry, Lawrence, KS:

Just one of the best events ever. Where else but " (Trail) Nerd Nation" does the winner of a 100K go out to an aid station to volunteer and cheer on the other runners?? Then sweep the course and make sure the last runner gets in safely? Oy!

Erica Plumlee, the wife of one of my co-workers, Jeff Plumlee, ran the marathon. Jeff told me this morning that it was one of the best organized events he's seen (he runs some half-marathons, and does a lot of road bike races), and that Erica really had fun.

My sentiments exactly. But very nice to have them validated by outside sources. Along with having had a fantastically fun, if somewhat strenuous, day, I am just SO PROUD to be associated with the Trail Nerds. It was Ben's first 100k as RD, but you'd never know it.

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It was a joy to come into the aid stations. Caleb, Josh, Randy Albrecht, Jim



Davis, Matt Becker -- "they've all been through it, so they know how to do it," as the old saying, which I just now made up, goes. No one makes as good a volunteer as a runner, except maybe a runner's spouse, as the two Stacy's and Vicki proved.

Two Stacy's and a Vicki -- you know the Customer Care is going to be top notch -- it was.

Well, I apologize for gushing, but "good event" hardly covers it, and I just wanted to supply an objective, disinterested perspective (I think I failed miserably).

- Gary

P.S. I hope I finally put to rest my rep for not liking water crossings. I went through every one of them on this race -- some of those suckers were nearly ankle deep!

Photo by Dick Ross, www.seekcrun.com

Shane Jones, Kansas City, KS:

I don't know what was wrong with me last Saturday, but I hit the wall big time.

I was signed up for the 40-mile version. I missed the Rockin K marathon earlier this month with a bum foot, so I was a little worried about the distance. The first 21 mile loop went fine.

Lance, Cody and I ran together for most of the loop and we finished it in about 3 1/2 hrs. We were on a pretty good pace for a sub 8 hr time. The second loop turned into a death march for me. By the time I got to the Land's End aid station I had stopped looking at my watch. I felt terrible. I finally stumbled onward and made it into the KUS aid station. I found Lance and Gabe there and I ate some watermelon and drank some water. The three of us left together and made decent progress for a couple of miles. I stopped because I thought I was going to puke. I sat there for a couple of minutes and then I decided to lay down and rest for a while. A few runners went by (Thanks Stuart and Willie) and said they would tell the land's end aid station that there was a man down. A little while later Sarah came by and asked me what I was doing. I informed her that I was tired and was

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taking a rest. She was having knee problems so she decided to keep me



company for a bit. We finally decided to try and make to the aid station so we both started walking. We had only been going a few minutes when Bad Ben and Jesse came running down the trail. They both looked a little worried. I asked Ben if he thought I should try to finish. He told me NO!

I was okay with dropping out. I'm kind of disappointed, but at what point does it become pointless to continue? Would it have been worth risking further damage to keep going or was I just being a wuss? I always ask myself questions like these after a DNF. I just look at it this way. I got in a nice 32 mile training run and I got to get sick and puke in a trash bag in the car on the way home. The weird part was that my legs felt fine during the race, no cramping or any other problems. My stomach just went sour. I guess that's what I get for underestimating the heat and humidity.

Kyle put in another strong run, almost breaking 10 hrs for the 100k!!! Cody decided to drop down to the 40 mile and finished in 8:15. Lots of other local trail runners had good races as well (<http://www.psychowyco.com/id1.html>).

Our Midwest Vasque shoe rep Dan Dehlin, smoked the marathon in 2:40 and fellow trail nerd Mike Swords ran a 3:12! Great job on the 1st annual, and a big thanks to everyone who helped out!

Free State 100-Kilometer Race Report, by Kyle Amos, Olathe, KS

While marking the course on Friday in the rain, I was looking forward to a 62-mile mud slide. On Saturday morning the trails were in much better shape than I expected, but still had some very muddy sections. The race started off great for the first loop, most of which I spent around Phil Sheridan. Coming into the start finish area I was just under 3 hours and knew that I needed to slow down a little because I had two more laps and it was getting hot. Phil and I kept taking turns

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up front within eye sight of each other, but never really ran together. Out of the 12 times we were at aid stations during the day, Phil and I were at 10 of them together. The second loop was a little slower but I still felt good. Going into the



Photo by Rachel Seymour, Lawrence Journal World

third loop it was getting hot and I was walking more and more, but I was looking forward to Caleb pacing me for the last 14 miles. Running/chasing Caleb was a different story. He was able to push me out of my comfort zone and drop my pace down at least a minute or

two per mile. It felt like one of our normal training runs where I have to work as hard as I can to just keep up with him. There were a few extra walking breaks during the last 10 miles because of over heating but when I saw mile marker nine, I knew I only had about 2/3 of a mile and all of a sudden I felt great. I was able to reach my two goals for the day which were take in more calories throughout the race and get as close as I could to 10 hours.

Now a few days after the race, I still have some very sunburned arms but I am ready to continue training towards Kettle (100-miler) on June 2nd. I also wanted to thank all of the volunteers that helped mark and de-mark the course, working at the aid stations (a hard job with three races going on and a 100k cut off at 1 a.m.), and taking photos all over the course.

Race highlights:

- Oranges tasted great and I was even craving them between aid stations.
- For the first time I used a combination of Succeed and Endurolytes which worked great.
- I was able to get in and out of aid stations quickly for two reasons:
 1. Phil was right there with me
 2. Great volunteers who have a lot of ultra experience (runners and the wonderful wives)
- I had to stop two times to get rocks out of my shoes. Rocks were stuck under my insole which has never happened before.
- Getting into the lake during the third loop felt great and also took off a few layers of mud.

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- During the 2nd or 3rd loop there were about 30 sailboats lined up about 200 yards off the shoreline. Not a good idea to look at on a very rocky red trail.
- I don't think I have ever seen someone having as much fun as Gary H. during an ultra. Those of you that saw him during the race know what I am talking about.

(By the way, Kyle won the 100K. – Ben Holmes, RD)