

Kettle Moraine Race Report by Gabe Bevan

A video clip of my finish is here

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pGn1brDTF-4>

Photo Album <http://www.winkflash.com/photo/public.aspx?u=tjbevanrn>



I decided in January to shoot for the Kettle Moraine 100 this year. So everything I had done this year was in preparation for this race, including Cameron Fat Ass, Psycho Wyco, Rocky Raccoon pacer, Brew2Brew, Rockin K and Free State. I had a rough go of it at Free State 100k so I was a bit nervous heading to Wisconsin. We decided to make a family vacation out of the trip and stretched it into a 5 day stay. Rick Mayo was driving up to pace for the last 38 miles. I felt a lot of pressure going up since a lot of other people had time invested in my little run also.





My goal was to finish and if possible under 24hrs.

We arrived in Wisconsin on Thursday evening and just hung out and let the kids swim and watch movies. I decided to hop in the pool for a swim and caught my heel on the texturized steps and ripped a hole about the size of a dime in my heel. Like I didn't have enough to worry about already. I had to go find a bottle of NuSkin at the store and spent the next 2 days trying to cover the exposed skin. Friday we checked out an Artisan well and some of the state park and lakes. The town of Whitewater was very beautiful with many lakes and recreational areas which are very well maintained. Kyle Amos and his family arrived Friday afternoon along with Rick a few hours later. We all headed over to packet pickup at La Grange General Store and let our kids run some of their energy off. We went to the start finish line a few miles up the road and took a walk down the Pine covered forest to get a feel for the trail. We opted to stay in town for our prerace meal and ate at a local family restaurant. It was Kyle's daughters birthday so we got to have a little Bday cake for desert also.

I actually slept pretty well the night before the race. We got everyone up early and headed to the start finish line about 5:00. After dropping off my overloaded dropbags we got some instructions from the RD and were ready to head out. The race started on a 7.5 mile stretch of Nordic trail, then switched to the Ice Age trail out 31 miles then back to the start finish where the 100k finish was and where the 2nd 38 mile out and back started for the 100 milers. The countdown hit 0 and I was off. I had on my new Montrail Nitrus shoes which

I had only run 12 miles in but they felt so good I had to wear them. Everything was fairly congested the first few miles but began to separate quickly after that. The first 7.5 miles was a roller coaster of wide trails which had very little flat running. I of course walked the hills and let it go on the downs. I had a familiar pain in my right shin which was not good. I had to stop and loosen my shoe to keep pressure off the area which helped a little. I figured after a while it would be masked by something hurting worse.

The first 15 miles I ran with Ken Plumb who did the Cameron fat ass this year, his son Steve lives in KC and does some of our local races. He noticed my trail nerds shirt and we struck up some conversation from there. He helped mark much of the course and gave me a great run through of what to expect. We got a good downpour of rain for about 20 minutes to give the ground a lot of moisture to fuel the humidity.

The 15 mile aid station was my first chance to see my family/crew. They refilled my bottles and got me everything I needed pretty quick. My wife checked the splits I gave her and I was a few minutes ahead of schedule which was good. I had made laminated cards for her and I with all the aid stations and splits along with the symptoms/solutions for common electrolyte and hydration problems that Karl King had in posted in UltraRunner. I was really determined to keep my fluids and electrolytes balanced and avoid the cramps which continually plague me.

I was running fairly relaxed but the heat wasn't too bad yet. The next 16 miles I knew I was starting to struggle a bit. The only flat portions of the course were in open tall grass prairies which were very hot and muggy. Kyle Amos flew past me when I was about 4 miles from the 31 mile turnaround. Only a few others had gone by so I knew he was close to the lead and about 8 miles in front of me



already.

Upon reaching the 31 mile turnaround I knew I was struggling and had lost the few minutes of cushion I had for my 24 hour pace. Seeing my wife and kids again kept me positive and Rick was doing his best to have everything ready when I arrived. After heading back for the start finish I noticed Carey Smith, a SLUG, from his blog which I keep up with. We talked for a while and he was running pretty strong for his first 100 mile race. Once we hit the prairie again I tried to pick up the pace and get through the flat sections strong to make up a little time. Carey took some walk breaks so I continued running most of the way through the prairies. The heat was getting to me a bit now. It was about 80 degrees but the humidity was terrible. I had been soaked for 8 hours by now and I was really getting overwhelmed by negative thoughts. All of the sudden I just wanted to stop. What was happening?? I was only about 45 miles in at this point and I just wanted to go to the hotel, take a shower, lay down and watch TV. My legs were really aching and I started thinking about what hurts bad enough to make me quit. I just kept thinking ahead of how long I had left and how much trouble everyone was going through for me. Maybe this 100 mile crap isn't for me, maybe I just got lucky the first time and now the heat, humidity, hills and terrain were just too much for me. I walked and walked and walked. I tried to fake feeling OK through the next few stations and just keep moving. I was hoping to keep it together and eventually it would pass.

About 1 mile out from the 55 mile aid station I was still mostly walking. I was down and couldn't pull it together for some reason. I decided I had to run. I was now substantially behind my 24 hour pace, it was now or never. I took off and

started moving pretty good until I caught my toe and in the process every muscle in my legs locked up with intense cramps. I fell down unable to move my legs, screaming in pain trying to rub the cramps out. It took about 5 minutes to be able to get up again. I started running again and caught my toe once more and the whole freaking thing played out again. Here I was hobbling into the aid station hoping for someone to say it was OK to quit, that I had tried my best and it just wasn't my day. I tossed my water bottles to the ground and Rick picked them up to go fill them. Tiff asked what was wrong and I just lost it. I put my head on her and had a complete breakdown. I don't think my kids have ever seen me cry before other than a funeral, they were really concerned for me. I was babbling about being too far behind and cramping too bad and who knows what else. My loving wife picked my head off her shoulder and said "It always hurts, you always have cramps. You need to get your freakin head straight." Then pushed me to the aid tent and said to eat some food and get moving. My kids were playing with their stuffed Pokemon toys at the aid station. I asked Corbin if I could take his favorite one with me to help me out. I put it in the side pouch of my Nathan 2v Plus. It looks like a little dinosaur, I zipped up the pouch enough secure it and we left his head sticking out so he could see. Kyle was in the tent also, he asked how I was doing and I am not really sure what I said. He told me to refuel and get through it. He was now 15 miles ahead of me and looking really strong.



Ok, so now what? My wife won't let me quit, my kids are really upset and worried about me, I am carrying around a stuffed animal for help and I got 45 miles to get done. The next person that passed me was wearing a yellow ribbon which many people wore in remembrance of Lisa Conover who died unexpectedly the previous week. She was a very accomplished ultrarunner who was signed up to run in the race this year. I thought about her and her family, even though I didn't know her personally I started thinking about what she would have given for a few more days on this earth with her friends and family and one more race to run. Suddenly it seemed disrespectful and selfish to even think about quitting. I DO have the chance to run in this race and a few more days with my friends and family, so I had better take advantage of it.

I switched the IPOD to my run hard category. My special few songs which under certain situations light a fire under my ass and I was gone. I was going to finish and under 24 hours at that. I was about 30-40 minutes behind schedule and I really tried to pound it through the next 7.5 miles. I was singing loudly along with the music, luckily there weren't too many runners around to witness that. I came into the 100k mark just about 10 minutes behind pace. I knew I had a lot of work to do but I also had Rick to help push me through the night. My kids were really happy to see me doing ok. They had their new LED headlamps on and were making sure to let me know they were using them. I changed clothes and got everything ready for the night.

Stuart and Deb Johnson wished me well along with some other people who kept calling me "big guy" the whole race. I guess they didn't know I lost 10 lbs for this race and this was about a little as it gets. Oh well, I guess it is better than "fat guy".

Rick and I took off for about 1/2 mile until I realized I didn't have my race number on. I asked him to go back for it and he was back about 5 minutes later, hyperventilating, with my race number. I told him he only brought 2 safety pins and he needed to go get 2 more but he didn't got for it.

We made good time for the 7.5 miles out to the turn for the night out and back. When we hit the singletrack there I was having a hard time keeping up the pace. The terrain out there was pretty rough for night running and it felt

like everything was uphill, not to mention the constant barrage of steps built on the trail that were pounding my quads. I lost my balance and took a good spill about 2 miles from the 89 mile turnaround. I just laid there, I lost my headlamp. water bottles, hat and flashlight. Rick was laughing because I could not get up. He gathered my things and helped me to my



feet.

We hit the turnaround point knowing it was going to be a matter of minutes that decided if I was going sub 24. I shoved about 3 cups of Coke and a bunch of food down hoping to get some energy to stay awake. One mile after leaving the aid station my stomach was upside down and I couldn't run. Rick told me to use my finger to empty my stomach so I stood hunched over trying to gag myself for several minutes until it finally came up. Rick was kidding when he said that but I thought it was the only way to get back to running.





I didn't eat anything else the rest of the way. I knew I wouldn't make it if my stomach went south again. We ran pretty hard to the 7.5 mile mark where I got caught in some barbwire and tore up my lower legs. I rubbed some dirt on the cuts so the blood wouldn't get on my new shoes, not sure about that idea. We got moving good until about 4 1/2 miles out and I realized we had got a good cushion built up. Rick called my wife at the hotel so they could get out to see me finish. We met up with Jerry from Chicago and took it easy the last few miles in. The sun was rising, the mosquitoes were thick and life was good. The finish time was 23:36 and I was fine with that. Kyle came out to see me finish and there were several people there to cheer us in. Timo, the RD, was genuinely happy for us. I got my copper Kettle, sat in the chair by my family, Rick and Kyle and had a beer while cheering in the next few finishers.





The trail nerds are definitely getting known. Many people commented on my trail nerds shirt, "Hey, your one of those nerds." Kyle, you are one fast mutha. There were about 57 finishers of around 125 starters.



I learned a lot about myself in this race and a lot about those who support me. It takes a great deal of physical ability to finish any race. It takes a great deal more mental and emotional strength to finish 100 miles. I am an ultrarunner and trail nerd and damn proud of it. People always look at me funny, like I am crazy when they find out about running 100 miles. Ohh...If they only knew.