



Jeff Behrens, sporting his huge finisher's medal.
Photo by Dick Ross at www.seekcrun.com



Race Report:

3rd Annual

Psycho WyCo Run Toto Run

50-Kilometer, 20-Mile, 10-Mile Trail Runs

Wyandotte County Lake Park

Kansas City, Kansas

Saturday, Feb 10, 2007

This was the 3rd year that I've had the honor of race directing this race. Our local trail running group, the "Kansas City Trail Nerds," loves this course and event, so we put a lot of heart into it. This is always evident by how runners are treated at the aid stations, and is also evident in the course marking, the technical event shirts, and the finisher's hardware.

The Kansas City Trail Nerds are a group that meets four times per week to train on rocky and root-filled trails. Two of those training runs are run after dark using flashlights or headlamps. We're a low-key and fun-loving group that also gets involved with trail advocacy, trail maintenance, and sustainable trail building. We have many races throughout the year as part of our "KS-MO trail running series," which (this year) is sponsored by Vasque.

The event location, Wyandotte County Lake Park, is a beautiful "piece of the Ozarks" located in the Kansas City metropolitan area, just 30 minutes from MCI airport. At its center is a beautiful lake that is an attraction not only for anglers and boaters, but also for a wide range of wildlife. The park (and course) is wooded with hardwoods, juniper, ancient cottonwoods and large maples. On race day, we had sightings of deer, wild turkey, geese, and bald eagles. The lions, tigers and bears seemed to stay far away from the trails, though.

The 50K course is a wheel-measured three-loop course on bridle trails and single-track trails. There is approximately 5000 feet of elevation change per 10.35-mile loop. There is 2520' of up, and 2520' of down, with about 22% of "flat." We also have a 10-mile and a 20-mile option. Out of town runners and many local runners are perennially surprised by our "non-flat" Kansas course. The footing on the hills and single track sections is always treacherous at best, but on race day this year there was an added attraction: ice. Basically, the downhill and uphill sections resembled an Olympic Luge course. If you had brought your sled, you would have excelled on the downhill parts (prior to breaking your neck at the bottom). In addition to bridle trail, there are two single-track sections. One is aptly named "the Wyandotte Triangle" due to the confusing twists and turns you take while you're on this 1-mile section. Runners are always convinced that they are in a wooded version of the Bermuda Triangle, and that they will never get out of this ridiculous maze. The other single-track section is named "Fester's Wander," and was partially designed by the race director's dog. "Bad dog, Fester...you call that a race course?" These sections are not "normal" mountain biking single-track trail, but are made for trail running, only. They have low overhangs, sharp turns, and in some cases, less than shoulder width clearances. In other words, they're a lot of fun to run on initially, but later on in the race they can kick your butt. The rest of the course is composed of wider bridle trails that go straight up and down many of the 260' hills, with a lot of loose, fist-sized sharp rocks and exposed roots thrown in for good measure. One of these hills is at a 26% grade. There is also a 1/3-mile paved section. There isn't much relief on the pavement though, as it goes straight up a very decent hill. Yes, it's a challenging course, but darn fun! But as we say on the web site, **"it's Kansas, how tough could it be?"**



Runners on the "Fester's Wander" section of trail.
Photo by Rick Mayo

To deal with the icy course, we had put out a call to the KC Trail Nerds for cordless drills and screws. “Screws, you say? What the heck for?” Hex-headed 3/8” long sheet metal screws are the perfect traction device on ice, if copious amounts of them are screwed into the bottoms of running shoes. They work darn well; better than any traction device you can buy. Many runners weren’t convinced, at first. Some, (especially the two running store owners running in the race), were very stubborn. Many runners who had performed poorly on their first 10-mile loop had second thoughts, though. As they slid back into the main aid station, they stopped at our NASCAR-style pit stop, put their feet into the air, and said, “screw me!” A couple of volunteers would go to work powering screws into the bottoms of their shoes. Quite a sight!



Shoe- Screwing pit stop.
Photo by Dick Ross at www.seekcrun.com



Debbie Webster, super finish line volunteer.

Race day started out a little chilly at 16 degrees Fahrenheit. Wind was not a factor, and never is on this course because of the woods. It eventually warmed up to a balmy 27 degrees by early afternoon. Most of the runners stayed very warm, due to their energy expenditure on the relentless hills.



And they’re off!
Photos by Dick Ross at www.seekcrun.com



Runners, one-minute into the race, heading for the trails.

We had a fast field for the men’s 50K race, this year. Todd Nott, the course record holder and 2006 winner was back. Local "Trail Nerds" and fast runners Caleb Chatfield, Kyle Amos, Josh Pool, and Greg Burger all had a decent shot at a top-five finish. Midwest talents David Wakefield, Paul Schoenlaub, Phil Sheridan, Rick Smith, Ben Gilbert, Charles du Preez, and Mathew Baker were also primed and ready for a top finish. We also had our first international competitor, Bjoern Grass from Germany. He’s no slouch either, and came with a very decent ultrarunning pedigree. The female field for all three races was wide-open, but Suzie Scheer and Kelley Johnson were known for their speed.

The race started shortly after 8 a.m. The first two to finish the 10.35-mile loop were Sam Volkman and Dan Kuhlman, the 1st and 2nd place 10-mile race finishers. Sam burned through the 10-miles in a new course record of 1:15:17, which was 5 minutes faster than last year's winner. Third to finish the loop was "Kansas City Trail Nerd" Caleb Chatfield, a homegrown 50K competitor and a member of the Montrail Regional Team. About 2 minutes behind Caleb, fellow "Trail Nerd" Kyle Amos rocketed through, grabbed a bottle at the aid station and left. The next 50K competitor was 10 or more minutes behind Kyle. This trend was to be repeated over the next two loops. Upon completion of the 2nd loop, Kyle had closed the gap with Caleb to nearly one minute. We now had ourselves a horse race!



Caleb Chatfield on the icy course.



Kyle Amos in "Super Cruise" mode.

Photos by Rick Mayo

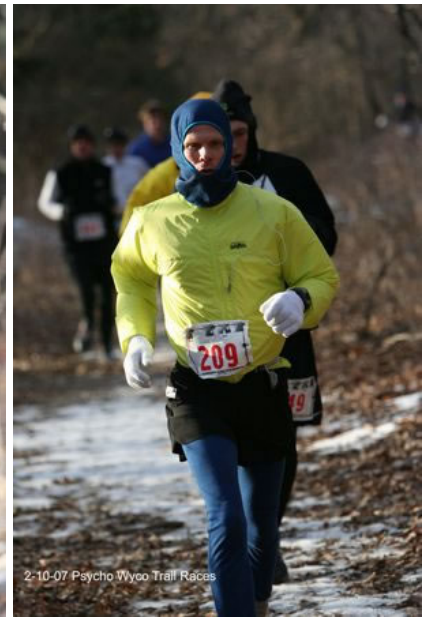
At about 4-1/2 hours, we started looking for the first 50K finisher to dash to the finish line. In rolled Caleb Chatfield, in a course record-shattering time of 4:39:17. Three minutes later, Kyle Amos rolled in, close to last year's record time. And this was done on a course blanketed with ice!!! The next runner, Ben Gilbert of Omaha, would finish a little over 17 minutes later. Todd Nott and Greg Burger (another Trail Nerd), rounded-out the top five. Kelley Johnson won the female 50K race handily, despite starting the race 10-minutes late. She is a talented runner and still holds the female 10-mile record. She's also the Midwest Mizuno rep. "Trail Nerd" Sarah Sinning of Lawrence, Kansas was in 2nd place, followed by Maria Barton from Minnesota. Sarah rarely misses a Trail Nerd trail training run, and has improved greatly in the few months she's been training with us.



Caleb Chatfield & Kyle Amos, 1st and 2nd Place 50K finishers. Kyle and Caleb exchange congrats.
Photos by Rick Mayo.



Kelley Johnson, Fem. 50K Winner. Sam Volkman shatters 10-mile record. Sarah Sinning, 2nd Place 50K
Photos by Dick Ross.



Suzie Scheer destroys the 20-mile record. Emily Horn takes 2nd in 20-miler. Michael Mastin, 20-mile record breaker. Photos by Dick Ross.

The 20-mile race is always less attended than the other two races. Michael Mastin of Prairie Village, Kansas ran a very fast 3:05:43, which was a record by over a minute over last year's time. Richard Stigall and Jeff Behrens came in 2nd & 3rd, respectively. Suzie Scheer massaged the old 20-mile record by 23 minutes, and finished 4th (overall) in the race. Fellow "KC Trail Nerd" Emily Horn took 2nd place honors, followed by Karen Meeken.

The 10-mile race always draws a fast crowd of mainly road runners who want to try their hand at a serious trail run. The aforementioned Sam Volkman and Dan Kuhlman took 1st and 2nd, and Greg Schuman was a close third. Christine Price of Des Moines, Iowa finished over 10 minutes ahead of locals Angela Ballard and Kelly Cool.



Christine Price of Des Moines, Iowa. Dan Kuhlman, a darn fast 52-year old! Angela Ballard, 2nd Place Fem. 10-mile Photos by Dick Ross.

We also had some non-traditional and “interesting” competitors. Among the most interesting had to be **“Barefoot” Rick Roeber**.

Rick usually runs marathons on pavement, and has run one 40-mile ultra-marathon, before. He’s a very decent runner by any count, and can hold his own with almost anyone his age (or younger) in a marathon. I had offered him a free race entry, if he could complete one 10.35-mile loop. He trained for the cold conditions, and took me up on the offer. Having met Rick and gotten to know him better this past couple of years, I knew that he had iron resolve, and would only show up if he thought he was ready.



“Barefoot” Rick Roeber.

This was his first “true winter trail running” experience, though. This course can seriously challenge (or hurt) your average “shod runner,” let alone someone with no shoes, running in sub-freezing temperatures, on ice. As Rick put it in his race report: **“I, personally, think this was more demanding than any running event I have done, including all my marathons and my 40 mile ultra. I really feel that I accomplished something that very few have ever contemplated -- 10 miles barefoot on a very tough rocky trail in sub-20 degree F with snow and ice covered conditions.”** - Amen, brother!



Photos by Dick Ross at www.seekcrun.com

Another interesting story this year was the invasion of the “Trail Teen Titans.” Six teen-runners hit the 10-mile trail race and two teens from Bonner Springs, Kansas, (Alex Perica and Joseph Schmidt) ran the entire 50K!!! Not only did all of these guys and gals enter the race, but they knew what they were doing...they really rocked the course! Tanner MacNamara took 6th place overall honors in the 10-mile race with a time of 1:29:02! Jessica Moseman of Plattsmouth, Nebraska, (Todd Nott’s ‘hood), ran a 2:00:12 in the 10-mile race, and was 5th female overall, at the tender age of 15! Trail running has a bright future, if this trend keeps going.



Alex Perica, 17-y.o. 50K racer
Photo by Dick Ross.



Jessica Moseman, (15), is 5th Female overall in 10-mile.
Photo by Rick Mayo

Races don't just happen. We once again had a wonderful team of volunteers for this year's race. Many of these volunteers are trail and ultrarunners themselves, so they can really attend to the runners' needs. The Wyandotte Triangle (tent) Aid Station was crewed by Ron Jansen, Jeff Perry, and Alexander Kovalev. Ron even ran-in with the last 50K runner as a self-appointed "course sweeper." At three-fourths the way through every loop was the Amos Family aid station. Stacie Amos and the extended Amos Clan of family and friends does a superb job of cheering-on and attending to the runners every need. James Barker cooks his famous "from scratch" soup and does a variety of jobs at this aid station. At the Main Start/Finish Aid Station: Vicki Holmes, Dave Boone, Debbie Webster, Julie Toft, and a few others kept us and the runners going throughout the day. Rick Mayo and Ben Reeves had the task of "rovers" to fill-in where needed and to coordinate others to do so, as well. Prior to the race, we had a corps of trail markers captained by Kyle Amos. Shane Jones and the rest of the Trail Nerds did a lot of work to make things happen, too. Post race, we even had the first place 50K finisher, Caleb Chatfield (and his dad Lonnie), show up the next morning with Shane and I to clean up the visible markings. In what other sport do you have the frontrunners doing so much of the work?



Vicki, Holmes Rick Mayo, and Stacie Amos.



"Bad Ben" Holmes with "Good Ben" Reeves

Photos by Dick Ross at www.seekcrun.com

In addition, the Kansas City Trail Nerds help to clean and maintain the trails during the year, and help with the planning and logistics. The park's rangers and Wayne Burns of the Unified Gov't Parks Department were terrific folks to work with. They even had the gate open early for us, this year.



Photos by Dick Ross at www.seekcrun.com

This year we had record attendance, 242 total finishers out of 281 starters. In 2006, we had 197 finishers out of 213 starters, and our first year, we had 23 finishers out of 41 starters. This race just gets more and more popular. All entrants got a nice “technical” long-sleeve shirt, and finishers received either a dog tag (for the 10-miler), or a very large gold medal for the 20-miler or 50K. The shirts and hardware were all emblazoned with the race logo.



Race day timing was provided by Raul Flores, and his RaceDay Timing Solutions equipment and experienced race-know-how. His (DAG System) bib-number chips were a welcome addition to this 3-race event. Raul is the most experienced ultra-runner in the Kansas City area, so having him working the finish line gives a race director a “warm and fuzzy” feeling.

Here's how the three races stacked-up:

50-K Race: 67 Finishers
 20-Mile Race: 35 Finishers
 10-Mile Race: 140 Finishers

Top 10 Overall finishers:

50K Trail Run

Male

1	Caleb Chatfield	Mission KS	4:39:17.6	***Course Record
2	Kyle Amos	Olathe KS	4:42:38.0	
3	Ben Gilbert	Omaha NE	5:00:26.3	

4	Todd Nott	Plattsmouth NE	5:06:57.8
5	Gregory Burger	Lecompton KS	5:15:47.0
6	Charles du Preez	Aurora NE	5:20:14.9
7	Joe Winch	Knoxville IA	5:26:55.6
8	Paul Schoenlaub	Saint Joseph MO	5:35:22.4
9	David Wakefield	Topeka KS	5:35:50.2
10	Rick Smith	Sabetha KS	5:38:04.3

Female

1	Kelly Johnson	Kansas City	6:16:27.0
2	Sarah Sinning	Lawrence KS	6:57:09.6
3	Maria Barton	Saint Paul MN	7:16:04.1
4	Samantha Deshler	Armstrong IA	7:58:05.2
5	Greta Southall	Indianola IA	8:19:42.5
6	Jodi Alper	Basking Ridge NJ	8:41:42.9
7	Karen Koons	Indianapolis IN	8:42:58.5
8	Laurie Beland	Basking Ridge NJ	9:14:56.7

(Only 8 female finishers in the 50K)

Top 3 Overall finishers:

20 Mile Trail Run

Male

1	Michael Mastin	Prairie Village KS	3:05:43.8
2	Richard Stigall	Olathe KS	3:15:55.4
3	Jeff Behrens	Kansas City KS	3:25:09.0

Female

1	Suzie Scheer	Overland Park KS	3:29:34.3
2	Emily Horn	Overland Park KS	4:31:37.1
3	Karen Meeken		4:41:47.0

***Course Record (Suzie was 4th overall)

Top 3 Overall finishers:

10 Mile Trail Run

Male

1	Sam Volkman	Lansing KS	1:15:17.4
2	Dan Kuhlman	Lecompton KS	1:23:47.0
3	Greg Schuman		1:25:50.5

Female

1	Christine Price	Des Moines IA	1:31:06.7
2	Angela Ballard	Overland Park KS	1:42:07.7
3	Kelly Cool	Topeka KS	1:58:44.1

We had some great sponsors, this year:



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Mizuno – And “Wonderful” Kelley Johnson, Midwest area rep.

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For more information, photos, race reports, and finishers' stats:

<http://www.psychowyco.com/id52.html>

Happy Trails,

Ben Holmes
Race Director