

## 2007 Psycho Wyco 50k Race Report by Travis

My wife (Micaela) and I drove over to KC on Friday afternoon to pick up my race packet and to check in to the hotel room. We went to the packet pickup location where I met Ben for the first time in person. We talked a bit and noticed that he had a shoe sitting on the table with screws in the out sole. That made me a bit nervous. I had seen his recent post discussing doing this to your shoes, but was it really that bad out there? So I asked "How does it look out on the trail?" Ben quickly replied "Like a slalom." I was sort of taken back by this. Did I really need to put screws in my shoes. With less than 30 more seconds of talking to Ben, I was convinced. I mean, this guy runs 100's and is the RD, why should this newbie not take his advice? He told me that they would be screwing shoes at the start/finish before the start in the morning. Micaela and I left, checked into the hotel, got some dinner, and hit the bed early.



Screws in my shoes. This is post race and I had lost quite a few.

It was COLD out. I headed over to the start/finish and grabbed a screw gun and started putting 3/8 inch sheet metal screws into my out soles for traction. At this point I had a wave of realization coming over me.. "what the hell am I doing? I'm out here in the freezing cold getting ready to run 31 miles on a trail so bad that I have to put screws in the bottom of my trail shoes?!?!". I looked around and there were lots of others doing the same, so if I was crazy, at least I was not alone.



Lap 1 - 8:00 was approaching and Ben started giving the race instructions which were basically "be careful not to fall." Ben shouted "Go" and we were off. I have this habit of going out too fast pretty much every time I run, so I decided to ease up for the first lap and get a feel for what laps 2 and 3 would hold for me. There was also a 10 and 20 mile run going on at the same time, so the trail was pretty crowded and the slowest runner on the single-track sections, set the pace for everyone behind them. This was fine for me, it kept me in check and from going out too fast.

Everything went as planned for the first lap, except the ice. Ice was everywhere. I was really glad I put the screws in my shoes. I'm positive that I would have not been able to make some of the climbs in double the time without the head of those screws gripping the ground. There were a lot of climbs covered in ice and not much flat ground. 22% flat or something like that so moving at a fast pace was not happening very often and when it did, you could pretty much count on a patch of ice or a log to pop up out of no where and slow you down. I finished my first loop in 2:11.55



Thumb's up

Lap 2- I was sitting down on a picnic table in the aid station at the start/finish. People were filling up water bottles and another guy was with a screw gun, popping screws into my shoes as I drank some Heed and threw down some Hammer Gels. It was pretty awesome to see all this going on, while I sat on my butt. It was like I had my own pit crew. I threw on my headphones and I took off ready for another loop. I was feeling good with no issues to speak of. ITband was feeling good and that was a great thing. The course was cleared out for the most part. I ran most of this lap by myself, so I was glad to have some tunes along. I kept pretty much the same strategy as the first loop. Run when I could, walk with a purpose on the climbs, and stay as sure footed as I could on the ice. The aid station at mile 8 was AWESOME!! The people there were incredible. They clapped as I came up the hill to the pavilion, then ran out to meet me and grab my water bottle to fill it up. I have never strayed much from simple combo of Heed, Perpetum, and Hammer Gels, but I decided that I was going to try some new foods. I threw down on some chicken noodle soup, peanut M&M's and a square of a PB&J. All tasted great. I left the aid station with some well wishes from the crew there for 2 more miles before the completion of the 2nd lap. I hit loop 2 in 4:21.56 (2:10:01 lap).



heading the aid station after lap 2

Lap 3 - As I came down over the hill towards the aid station I heard my wife cheering. Ben was also cheering and asked me if I needed anything. I told him I had stuff in my bag and figured that I would get my Perpetum mix ready, but as I looked up Ben was jogging over to me to assist. He grabbed my water bottle and my mix asked me how things were going. I told him this course was nuts and he smiled. My wife was there too cheering me on and giving me good vibes by saying things like "you look way better then you did last year at McNaughton at this time." She was right, I felt good. I did not want to waste much more time at the aid station, so I grabbed a gel, ate some more M&M's and headed out for one last lap. I had a feel for the course now and knew that if I wanted to get a good lap in, I was going to have to push it early while there was more flat areas to make up time. I ran when I could and just concentrated on putting together a solid last loop. The course had become slicker in a couple of ways. One, the icy uphill were like polished granite from everyone else using the similar paths. Two, the sun had come out and the areas where the ice was thin became muddy, it had melted from rising temps and from all the foot traffic. I was cruising along and I hit several really icy spots. I'm sure if there was a camera out there filming when I slipped that a few of them would make some sort of highlight film, I never fell from the ice, but there was some sever flailing. I did however fall due to mud. I was running a slight downhill around mile 28. There was a trench area in the middle and I was running on the lip, switching from side to side depending on the best footing, or what I thought was the best footing. My foot came out from under me and I crumbled to the ground, sliding on my right side until I stopped and my head bounced a little off the ground. I was not hurt at all, I sort of grinned as I pushed myself up thinking "well, that could have been a lot worse." I took off again and headed for the finish. I rounded the last corner and heard the cowbell, Micaela, Ben, and the others at the finish line cheering. Done. 6:29:26 (2:07.30 lap)



Micaela bundled up at the finish line waiting for me.. Is she great or what?!?!



crossing the finish, see the mud on my right leg and on my hat? :)



Ben and I at the finish

I talked with some people after the race, including new course record holder [Caleb Chatfield](#), great job on a awesome time and a sweet beard, I can't go more than a week before it drives me nuts :) This was a hard race with lots of ice and lots of elevation change. I'm pretty happy with my overall time and how I handled myself over the course. If you look at my lap times, they get faster with each loop, not exactly the best way to do things. I will take some confidence away from this. Knowing that I can run 3, 10 mile loops (on a crazy course) in a row at a faster pace each time tells me I could have gone faster. I'm not looking back though, I'll take it for my 2nd official ultra and use what I learned and apply that to training and my next race. Thanks Ben for putting together a great race. Your course lived up to the name and the race volunteers were excellent. It's going to take something pretty special to top the folks at the Amos Family Aid station.

POSTED BY TRAVIS