

Heartland 100

October 11, 2008



Stacey, Ryder and I at the start

Leading into this run I have never been so relaxed about running a hundred miles. I wish I knew why I felt relaxed, so I could feel this way going into every race.

Life leading up to Heartland:

- Stacey got her gallbladder taken out on August 29th
- Ryder and I got sick two days later.
- We felt better after a week and then Stacey got really sick.
- Stacey had a spinal tap and it leaked so she had to have a blood patch
- We found out that we all had mono
- During this 2-3 weeks there was not much running going on for me
- 1-2 good weeks of running and then it was time to taper

Now after writing the lead up to Heartland I am still confused about feeling relaxed.

The night before Heartland:

The night before the race Stacey, Ryder and I checked into the Holiday Inn Express in Emporia with Caleb and Wynn. Ryder and Stacey watched Cartoons while I was arranging drop bags and making a list for Stacey of what I wanted at the aid stations. Wynn was doing same while Caleb provided the entertainment. Then lights were out at 9:30 with a 4:00 wake up call. I woke up at 3:00 and never really fell back asleep but felt rested and ready to go. If you ever do this race, stay at the Holiday Inn Express because they have the most comfortable beds.

Prairie chicken capitol of the world:

Now off to Cassoday to hurry up and wait to start. I checked my pack, talked to a few runners and made the all important last trip to the porta potty and I was ready to run.



Pre race Wynn, Caleb and I

Trail Nerds Debbie, Colleen, Christy and Nick

I ran the 50 miler two years ago so I was excited to start the race because I knew I was going to see a beautiful sight. Starting at 6:00 a.m. it is pitch black outside and the course heads you right into the sunrise. The photo below is a good example but being there and seeing it in person is my favorite part of this race.



My crew:

The aid stations for this race were spaced out every 4-6 miles and many of them could be accessed by your crew. My crew for this race was my wife Stacey and 6 year old son Ryder. I can't say enough about how great of a job they did for me all day and into the night. Coming into the aid stations Stacey was all business and had everything ready and

got me out of there quick with everything I needed. Ryder gave me the greatest welcome every time yelling “daddy” and running to see me. Stacey and Ryder would walk me out of the aid stations with a kiss and a high five. Doing these races could not be done without my families support, they add so much to the enjoyment of the races.



Ryder running me into an aid station & having fun with 16 miles to go

The challenges of the day:

- lots of wind
- lots of running
- mid 80's during the middle of the day

Sunset:

The heat of the day seemed to really slow down my pace but then came the sunset. I LOVE RUNNING AT NIGHT!!!!!! With 25 miles to go it was dark again, much cooler, no wind, and I was feeling great. I really had to hold back from mile 75 to 90 worried I would blow up and have to crawl the last 10 miles. The plan for the last 25 miles was to run the down hills hard and slowly increase my pace. With 8+ miles to go I was still feeling good so I started walking less but kept the same running pace. Now at Ben's aid station with 5 miles to the finish I was feeling great and ready to see how hard I could push myself. During the last 5 miles I figured I would be close to a PR for a 100 miler but knew it would be close. With about a ½ mile to go I stopped looking at my watch and just ran. I crossed the finish line about with a new PR by about a minute.



A tired Ryder, Stacey and I at the finish

Done:

Sitting in a tent at the finish line we all decided to go back to the Holiday Inn Express and take a warm shower, get some food and sleep in those comfortable beds instead of the back of a car. That might have been the best decision of the day. Once in bed I was unable to sleep because my legs were a little uncomfortable. Around 6:00 I gave up and went to breakfast down stairs and stayed there for a few hours and grazed. Wynn hobbled down a little later. I love seeing the guy who won the race as uncomfortable as me. After sitting around in the room for a while it was time to go home and get Ella and get back to the real world.

Final thoughts:

- What a well organized and fun race
- The Flint Hills are beautiful
- I have the greatest crew in the world
- The wild horses on the course were amazing
- Put this race on you calendar for next year