

Run Toto Run by Londell



The dogs I am familiar with would have a hard time running this past weekend. At least my girlfriends dogs prefer to play in the mud, not run in it! But it sure was fun... As I woke Saturday morning the sky was cloudless and the temperature was rather kind to those of us who entered the PsychoWyco 50 K. I was concerned about the weather not just because of the course conditions, but on Monday I finally went to the Doctor to check my 5 week long head and chest issues and it was ear infection, sinus infection and bronchitis. After five days of antibiotics and two inhalers, I was breathing better, although still questioned the strength in the lungs and not working out for five days.

We left the motel at 7:00AM and arrived at the park at about 7:30. Parking was full so we parked along the access road entering the park. I set up my drop bag at the station and went into a panic. I left the inhaler at the Hotel. My girlfriend was running the 5 K so I decided not to tell her or she would have went back to get it. (That is the way she is... actually, this was her first trail race and she was a bundle of nerves.) I thought if I had trouble, I would see her at the first split and she could go get it and bring it to me at one of the aid stations.

As the race was preparing to start, I ran into Les, Julie F. and Maria. Nice to see faces. That was the only time I saw them also. The race start was onto a nice open area that quickly came to a crowded corner as we hit the trails. It was about a mile into it when we were all spread out and able to run on a mostly single-track trail. According to the Garmin, I was averaging a 14 min mile and felt comfortable. There was some ice and little mud, I was actually surprised

based on the course description that there were several parts that were runnable.

About 7 miles into the race, I started to wheeze. I was concerned as I had a hard hack cough that came with it. I knew I would have to have my inhaler if I had any hope of getting through the day. I came through the first loop very comfortable in about 2 hrs and 45 minutes. I noticed my girlfriend was not there and was not sure what happened. After 20 minutes I decided to proceed thinking I would just take it easy and hopefully finish.

The second loop was a nightmare. The first 2 miles were not so bad then the mud really became an issue. I hate to give it a simple name as mud as this was more like slick, slimy clay. It was unavoidable, if you stepped onto an uneven slope, you would slide. I fell several times throughout that second loop. At one time, I was wheezing bad and I decided to sit there, grabbed a bunch of mud and formed it into a pot... It was clay. Everytime my foot went in, I would pray the shoes and foot came out with it as the suction was unbelievable. Now it could be that a 245 pound guy also went deeper into the muck than other, but I found it more difficult to lift my feet through the mud than to run. As I continued to have difficulty breathing, I made the decision at about 16 miles I wouldn't finish the 50 K. My chest burned. The only way to control breathing was to assure I was not exerting myself as much as I had been. I enjoyed the mud, played in it a little, The second loop took me 3 hours and 40 minutes and I stopped at that time. They gave me a medal for finishing 20 miles, which on this course was, in my mind, an achievement. I did not see Les, Julie or Maria for the rest of the day, but I am anxious to get their reports of the course and the day. As I said, I did two loops and quit. Each loop could not have been more opposite as the course changed from a from the challenging course it is without ice to mud, to the ultimate test in trail running ability.