

2009 Psycho Psummer 50k Race Report

Laura Range

I arrived at Wyandotte State Park about 6:30 in the morning to organize myself for the long day ahead. As I stepped out of my car my glasses immediately fogged up. It was going to be a hot one. I filled my race pack with a few more salt caps for a total of twelve. I also included six gels and some gummy bears. I was going to carry one water bottle. I hoped that would be enough to get me through to each aid station.

My training had been sidelined by a torn gastrocnemius (small calf muscle) that I suffered in an April marathon. I had several long hikes 15-20 miles and a few hike/runs on the Chubb Trail in St. Louis prior to this race. So I knew this race would challenge me. Ignorance is bliss. This was my first 50k.

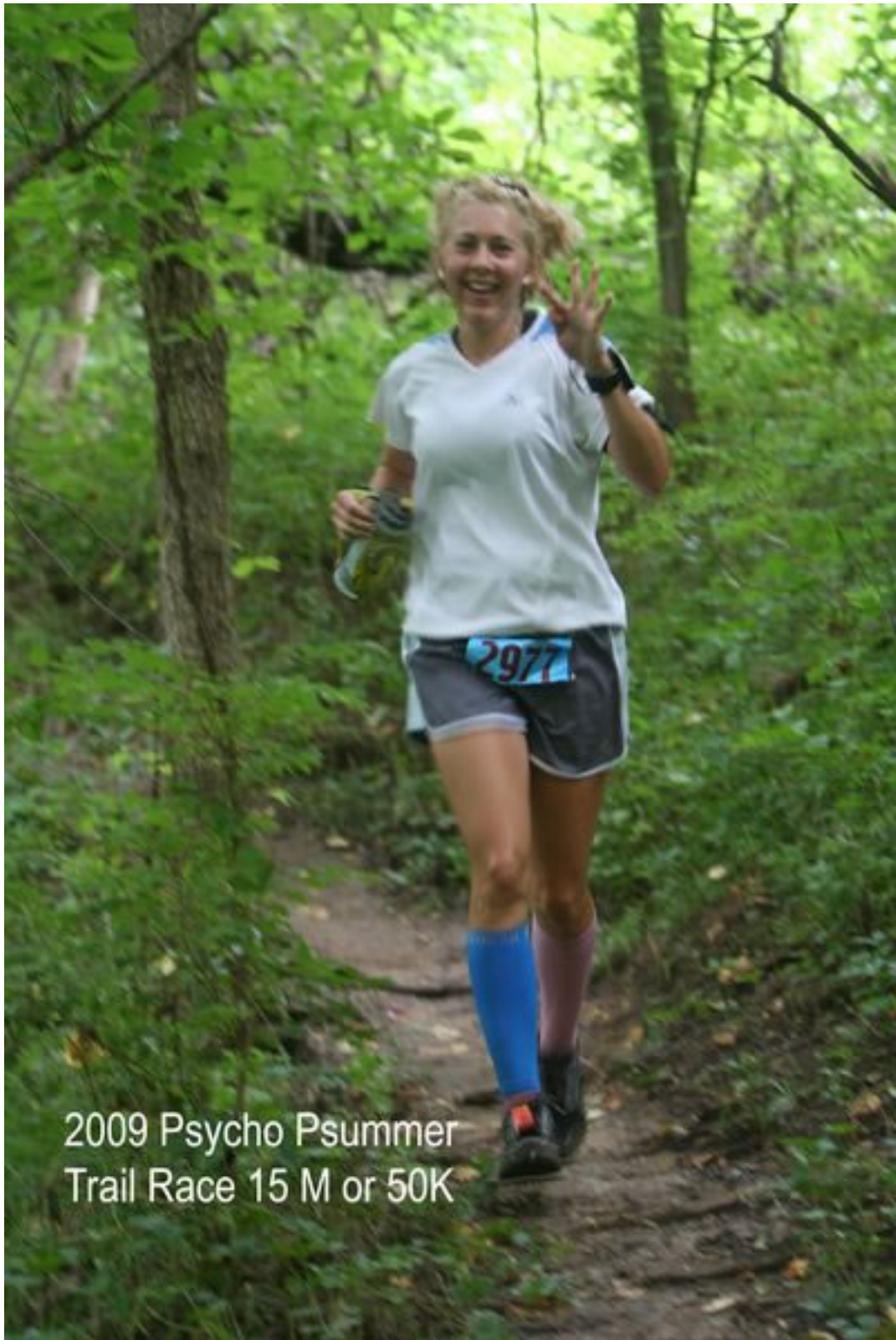
I chatted with a few runners from St. Louis prior to the start it seemed to ease some butterflies. Time to line up and the race is going. Training, injuries, dead lines, and daycare all faded away. I was running. I wanted to do each lap in about 4 hours. Not fast but realistic. As we climbed the first few hills my heart was high and I was sweating a lot. I was going to take a salt cap every hour; I changed that to every forty-five minutes. I watched as one of the experienced runners bounded down the next rocky descent. I thought wow he must be part gazelle. That got me smiling and the next few miles passed quickly. The trails on the first part of the race seemed to be an ongoing wave of up and downs. With one particular climb maybe around mile six that brought suffering to all.

The folks at the aid stations are magic. They filled my water bottle and offered help to an extent unheard in any road race. I ate PB&J's at every aid station, a salt cap and a few bites of watermelon. I ate a gel every hour also. The scenery was so beautiful. I can't imagine ever running another road race and enjoying it.

It was getting hotter and my heart rate was high. I was running scared. I had four bad blisters that burned like they were on fire with every steep descent. The hills gave way to some flatter terrain and another aid station. Someone sprayed me with really cold water that took my breath away. But I felt renewed. I made it to the last aid station and started the muddy bridge trail portion. My pace was good and the mud wasn't as bad as anticipated considering the rain we had the last few days.

Loop one was done in about 4:13. I felt good about that. But loop one was really hard. I ate and took two more salt caps. I felt I was running against the clock. No time to waste so I started loop two. I wondered if there was anyone behind me anymore. Probably not.....Just one more hill played out in my head countless times. I started the back small loop and got some kind words from some of the runners heading back in. That was helpful mentally. Somehow I missed the arrow and did the back short loop a second time. I knew things were looking strangely familiar but I didn't want to turn around. I finally made it back to the aid station they were a little surprised to see me as they were packing it up for the day. I assured them with a smile that no one else was out there as I had swept that part of the course. They gave me water and a great pep talk. I had added on about one extra hour to my time. I was ready to be done. I met a runner at this aid station who was fighting off heat exhaustion. We ran together to finish in 9:24.

I have to say that this was a great experience. Everyone was so kind. Someone at the finish got me the best hamburger I have ever had some cold water and my medal. Life is great. For the day I had fifteen salt caps, nine gels (yuck), two PB&J's, several pieces of watermelon, pretzels and lots of water. The volunteers made this race possible. Thank you!! See you next year. I gotta beat this year's PR ☺.



2009 Psycho Psummer
Trail Race 15 M or 50K