

Run Toto Run
By Zeke Bradley

Yippee, yippee, yippee, it's trail run day and mom brought me to race with her. I even have my own number, 1026. This is the best day ever. Dogs on the trail and even though I have to be on the leash, it's still going to be fun.

We get to the race start and almost everyone takes off running but us. Come to find out there is a 50k and 20 mile race that start an hour before ours so we watch dad and our friends run off and then we get in the car and wait.

An hour later, we take off running with over 300 other humans and a few dogs. A Weimaraner goes flying by me and I try to keep up but mom reels the leash in so I back my pace off to run with her. We run across a small field and road and come to a trail where we are immediately in mud. Even more fun than I hoped for, lots and lots of mud. Since I'm a Golden Retriever, the mud really likes to stick to me.

We cross the only creek a couple of miles into the race. Usually I like to lie down and cool off but not today, we are racing and I don't want all those humans passing me. We come to an aid station shortly after that but don't need it yet so continue on in a crazy loop. The trail zig zags a lot and people are above us on the trail and below us, I'm a little confused because I want to run with all of them but mom keeps me on track. We approach the next aid station and mom sets a paper cup in front of me with some water. A really, really nice man offers me some bacon and I'm more than happy to chomp it down. Off we go running through more mud. The trail seems to be all up or down and mom is sliding a lot. I just run across the top of the mud and jump over logs dragging her behind. On some of the up hills, I'm really pulling hard because mom's not as fast as me and I'm trying to make her go faster. One time a man asks if he can hang on to, thank goodness he doesn't.

A little later, there's a really steep, slippery downhill and mom is afraid she will face plant if I keep pulling at my pace so she lets me off the leash for a short time. Awesome, a chance to relieve myself and now I can go even faster. We get on to some level ground and my leash is reattached. We make it to another aid station and this time I get a Stinger Waffle. I like trail running, all kinds of treats along the way and the humans are really nice. They all want to talk to me and pet me.

The last couple of miles are pretty tough but we manage to pass a couple of ladies we have been behind all day. I'm starting to realize I've already missed a couple of naps so have slowed down and am running next to mom instead of in front of her. She must know the finish line is getting close because she starts running a little faster and we pass some guy that looks pretty tired.

I finally see the finish line and mom must be happy about that because she's going so fast now, she's practically dragging me for a change. We cross the finish line and a nice lady comes over and puts a medal around my neck. How awesome is that? I get to go run 10 miles in the mud with lots of humans and dogs and then I get a medal afterwards along with a peanut butter roll-up. It doesn't get any better than this.



