

The Decision to Run Injured

My decision to run the Promise Land 50k Despite being injured was set and that decision could not be altered. I signed up for both the LUS and the Beast Series with a goal of completing both of them. I was very excited and I looked forward to each race. My training was going well and I was logging in some descent miles. I started off this year by participating in a local 100k where I improve my time by an hour and twenty minutes from the previous year. I felt really good at my chances of doing well in both series.

It was after the Terrapin Mt 50k that I began to have an issue with my shin. At work, I have had repeated trauma to my shin in the same spot. At the same time, I was running about 70 miles a week. Over time I had developed a stress fracture that became very painful. I am no stranger to running with pain. During the Holiday Lake 50k, I slipped on one of the wooden bridges and bumped my head. I also went into the Terrapin MT 50k battling a knee injury. Now I found myself having to deal with a stress fracture of my shin. I altered my training to allow for some healing to take place while also increasing my vitamin D and calcium intake. I was not sure that I was doing enough to have a good finish but I knew that I would endure whatever I had to do make the cutoff times. It remained in the back of mind that I could potentially cause more damage by doing this race but it was never an option for me to stay at home. Staying home meant that I would not be able to complete either series and I would have to wait until next year to try again.

Race weekend was here and by the time we started the race I had received two good omens that assured me that I would have a good race. The first good omen came on Friday morning when I woke up with no pain. It was as if I was never injured. There was still swelling present but there was absolutely no pain at all. That made me feel good so I packed my car and took off to Virginia from Fayetteville, North Carolina. The second good omen came while I was setting up my tent. I realized that I did not have any batteries for my lantern so I drove about 12 miles to the store to get some. What I did not realize was that I drove the entire way with my car key on top of the car. If I would have look out of the sun roof just one time I would have seen my keys sitting on the top of my car. My car has a push button start and as long as the key is near the car it will start. When I got to the store I begin to search for my key but could not find it. I turned the car off and then I started it again. When it started I knew that my keys had to be in the car. I finally realized that at the camp site I had put my key on top of the car while I was setting up my tent. I got out of the car and there were my keys just siting there. After driving down that winding road and driving 60 miles per hour, my key had stayed on the car for the entire trip to the store. I said to myself, if God can keep me from losing my car keys then he would surely protect me through this race.

My race went better than expected. I dealt with pain from twisting my ankle, stubbing my toe on rocks, cramping, and running up hill, but not once did my shin bother me. It was a good day for me to be in the mountains and I was thrilled to be there. Now that it is over, I can let my shin heal before I start my training for Grindstone. I have often heard of stories of people having to overcome injuries to reach the finish of a race but this is not my story. My story is about the miracle of racing without having to overcome. This encourages me to always show up and have faith that God will protect me.

I want to thank all of the people who worked the aid stations and the people that cheered as we entered the aid stations. You all were great and you help us to continue on. Thank you to

my fellow runners who always have some encouraging word whether they are passing you or you are passing them. Finally, thank you to David Horton and all of the people that made this race possible.

Larry Williams

P.S. See you at Hellgate.