

Race Report

Bill Vickery

I just finished reading the race reports and enjoyed them immensely. I also had some good laughs about the woman in the long dress. This is a mystery I will help to clear up in a minute.

This was my first ultra. It was great. Thanks Dr.Horton for giving me, and many others, the opportunity to experience such a wonderful time. Your ability to inspire has created some urban legends and I can testify personally of your generosity.

My only complaint was the start of the race and the inability to get moving for the first two miles due to the crowd. By the time I finished the first loop I was 8 minutes off pace because it took us almost a half hour to finish the first 2 ½ miles. I got a late start because I was talking to the mystery woman. But first...

I was two miles from the finish and had to make it in 15 minutes in order to finish in my goal of 5 hours. I really didn't feel like it. Then I thought, @\$%^! I didn't just run 32 miles to screw up this up. My last two miles were my fastest. I came out of the woods and hit the road to see a man in a long braid. I grumbled, "I want to make it in 5 hours". This man then yelled at me like I haven't been yelled at since I put my initials in my mom's grand piano. He even took a few steps at me yelling the whole time, "RUN! THEN RUN!". That was incentive. I thought he was going to hit me. I took off in a sprint...really, no joke. I made it with seconds to spare. It wasn't until later that I found out the very vocal encouragement came from the winner himself. How cool is that?

Let me tell you something about the mystery woman. She was not a bandit, well, not really. She was given permission via email to walk the first loop by Horton. She considers her "running" shoes as... running shoes. She has never completed an ultra. However, she does like to hike and if it were not for her nine children she would spend more time doing exactly that. That's right, nine children. And, yes, they are all hers.

As far as the dress goes...It what she wears most of the time unless she is playing baseball with her kids and has to slide into base. She simply likes dresses and says that she has been wearing them so long she feels naked without it.

I talked with her after the race. She jogged the first 22 miles. She then took a wrong turn at Albuquerque and ended up having to backtrack four miles. So, she actually did a 38 mile jaunt. She also said about the runners, "Where did all those people come from (meaning you, the runners)? They were the friendliest, nicest people." She said everyone who passed her waved and smiled and said kind things. The reason she was coming down the road at the end while everyone else was leaving was due to her wrong turn. However, she said this was wonderful because everyone kept waving to her like they all knew her. I did tell her she was a little conspicuous. She said, "I am?" And, meant it.

As far as her bright smile... I too was attracted by that smile – I even kissed her., just like I did 17 years ago when I married her.

Joy (the woman in the dress) offers this explanation for her time in the woods:

“God told me to run the race as a sign to the Body of Christ – ‘It’s time to get your running shoes on!’ God is accelerating things in the Spirit and is doing a new thing that has never been done before. ‘Not by might, not by power, but by the Spirit’, says the Lord. Our responsibility is to get in the race, cooperate with God in obedience, and yield to the Holy Spirit.”