

Holiday Lake 50k++

February 14, 2009

Appomattox, VA

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First off, let me say that people on the VA Tech Triathlon team have been trying to get me to run this race for the past 3 years. Me being stubborn person I am, I decided to do the race on my own time. So what made me finally decide to do it? Well (1) I'm a senior (even though I'm not graduating-gotta love the 5 year plan), (2) that my dad agreed to run with me, (3) I've been wanting to enjoy those wonderful yummys I always see at the aid stations each time I've crew for my teammates at Masochist & Hellgate, and (4) I couldn't think of a better way to spend Valentine's Day with my two favorite men: My dad and my boyfriend Jordan (who also raced, and dominated by placing 7th! ☺)

To my own surprise, I actually put in some descent training, which definitely paid off race day. My dad did too, and I'm not afraid to say that, though he's 59 and I'm 21, he usually kicks my butt when it comes to running...

Race morning: Surprisingly woke up in a great mood. Usually I'm nervous and lay in bed wondering whether I should just go back to sleep rather than race. So I got myself ready, went to the lodge and eventually found my dad. Before the race started I went back to the cabin a few too many times, because the last time that bed was definitely looking much more warm and appealing than running outside in the cold. Finally, the race began, and I took off up the hill with my dad already insisting that I slow down (he's much better at pacing himself than I am, and without him I'm sure I would've killed myself in that first lap). When we arrived at the first aid station I was informed that I was one of the last Tech runners, which made me want to pick up the pace even more, but I listened to my dad and held back, as hard as it was, for the first half of the race.

The first half was uneventful. Pretty much, I was in a hurry and my dad kept insisting that I save some energy for later. I was definitely enjoying the aid station food, up until the end of the first half. At aid station 3 there were some pop-tarts and swiss rolls, two of my favorite foods, and I decided to indulge a little too much. I paid for this by feeling sick for the next hour and a half but, the food stayed down, that's all that matter's right?

I arrived at the turn around at approximately 2:55, right on pace to break 6 hours (our tentative goal). Seeing this, and seeing that my friends were a good 10-15 minutes ahead of me, I was ready to move out and not spend much time at aid station 4. But my dad had other plans, and I patiently waited for what seemed like FOREVER as he changed into some cooler clothes and ate (love you daddy!). At 3 hrs, we were off, and again I was in a hurry to catch my friends. It wasn't until about 23 miles when they were finally in sight, and this gave me an extra surge of energy. I was pleasantly surprised to be rearing to go so late in the race. We past them, and kept moving forward towards aid station 6. At that point we had caught up to our good friend John Price and were on pace to run a 5:45. We stopped briefly at the aid station and chatted with John for a few seconds. It was quite amusing to me, because I turned to get a fig newton (another one of my favorites), and the next thing I know he was nowhere to be seen. Guess we scared him off, because we never saw him again for the remainder of the race.

The rest of the race seemed to drag on. I was definitely starting to feel the mileage, but still pleasantly rearing to go and optimistic about the rest of the race. At this point, dad

was starting to struggle as he started tripping over roots and fell a couple of times. Reluctantly, I slowed down as he wanted to take it easy over the rougher parts of the trail. I guess all my experiences of crewing my friends had paid off, because I had no trouble negotiating the rougher terrain.

At the last aid station, my dad insisted that I leave him behind and work towards finishing in less than 6 hours. This was very tempting, because I was still feeling pretty good, and I knew we were cutting it close, but I decided that

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