

My First Ultra

by Mackenzie Prandi

I think I have thought about how to write this at least 100 times. It wasn't until my second ultra (Terrapin) that my first experience became clear. I have to break this down into 3 phases: 1. Pre-race 2. Race 3. Post-race.

Pre-Race: First, I have to give credit to my great friends who introduced me to the idea of trail running and ultra marathons (the Meadows), my coach for getting me prepared and to my husband for supporting my dedication to training. I had no problems with the training regiment for the first month. In fact, I enjoyed the ability to eat just about whatever I wanted. As I was going to satisfy my appetite for some pizza, I quickly learned the truth behind that quote/scene in ELF "The yellow ones don't stop!" Yes, I was a pedestrian vs. yellow cab. My first thought while hitting off the hood of that car was "just roll with this." My next thought as I was on the ground...this better not have affected me running Holliday Lake! I should have known then that a monster was going to be created. Praise be to God, I was not seriously hurt and was able to run the day after.

The Race: The pre-race dinner was a blast. Great food, prizes flying through the air, meeting new folks, etc. The part of the night which strikes me the most was the briefing given to the first-timers by Dr. Horton. From this talk, I have focused on a few facts which are vital: 1. It doesn't always get worse. 2. Bring TP 3. Beware, this sport is addictive. Before I could panic over what was happening, the race had started. Time passed so quickly for some reason (not that I was running that fast). It was awesome to see fellow runners at the turn. My favorite time after the turn was the second aid station. M&M's! They carried me through the last 8 miles. It was a great experience. I can't thank my husband enough for crewing!

Post-Race: Well, I was feeling pretty good until I stopped running! I thought that I would stretch out for good measure. I was obviously tight, but I did not anticipate the complete tetany that set in as I tried to get off the ground! After a nice waddle to the car, I was in a nice heated seat plotting my next ultra. Most importantly, I spent the ride home reflecting on the inspirations that helped me accomplish this goal: 1. God 2. Family 3. Friends 4. Those who can't.