

Holiday Lake: the beginning of the end!

My name is Frank Gonzalez and yes I think I am addicted to Ultras!!!

My history: It all started last February when my 235 pound Mexican body read an article about someone in runner's world attempting to run a 100 mile race. He describes the mental anguish and suffering he went through just to get to mile 80 something and not be able to finish. The thought crossed my mind, what it would take to get to that level. So I started running. The last time I ran any distance was when I was 19 years old and did the Adirondack marathon. I finished in 3:56 and basically crushed every bone in my left foot. Whatever, I was young. I began to tell some people about what I wanted to do and they pointed me to some people that ran these things. Tommy Field and Richard Michael were the first ultra runners I went out with. We ran 18 miles in February of 09. It was tough, cold, and yet something about me liked it. (along the way I suckered my best friends to run with me and now my best buddy Todd Foster is doing the whole Beast series with me..SUCKER!!!!) Fast forward to Promise Land 09 and I had lost close to 20 pounds and ran it in 6:36. Not bad for fat boy. Next was the MMTR and lost another 15 pounds and ran it in 9:21. Then benched 135 pounds 37 times to win a sweet gladiator sword. Best prize yet!! Finally I begged Horthy to let me run Hellgate. Yes I begged him. He let me in the Wednesday before the race and yes I finished it in 14:50. So what's the next step? THE BEAST! I have really been putting in a lot of running and just trying to drop weight.

Now to the Holiday Lake: I weighed in at a whopping 183 pounds before the race and felt as good as ever. (Yes I have lost over 50 pounds) In all 3 ultras prior to this I went out way too fast and hurt the second half so my game plan was to go out 30th and stay there till half way point and then run as fast as I could back. My crew was in place (consisted of my wife and surprisingly Jeremy Ramsey drove around with my wife all day) which I was glad for because I saw them a lot more times than I thought. The first half really wasn't very exciting. I ran at a medium pace, fought off the temptation to pass people and just stayed right where I wanted to be. I got to the turnaround at 2:50 and in about 25-30th place. Felt great. So I picked it up on the second half. Was amazed at how good I felt and that I was actually passing people. My wife and Jeremy kept yelling what place I was in every time I saw them. Went from 25 and then next were 19, then next was 17, and next was 13. Horthy seeded me at 13 and would have been happy getting 13 except for I kept feeling good. Last aid station came quickly and I was still 13 overall. Up to this point I had eaten 15 Gu's (raspberry pomegranate: the best Gu's I have eaten EVER! Thanks **Bikes Unlimited** for those!) Feeling good. I managed to pass 1 more guy and then I saw the top girl. She looked as strong as ever and finally caught her. Coming out from the lake with 2 miles left Jeremy says "you have 1 more guy to beat to be in top 10, he's one minute in front, anything you have left give it now!!" So I did! I passed Justine who stayed on my heels the whole time and we caught number 10 quickly and passed him. I started to cramp just a little now, but I knew I was close. I came out and hit the pavement with Justine on my heels. Sprinted in and ended up getting 10th overall and finished in 5:15. My second lap split was 2:25.

I had set one goal for this year and that was to get a top 10 in 1 race. It came early so now the pressure's off. But top five sounds good to. Thanks Christy for being the best crew ever, Thanks Jeremy for helping her, thanks Horthy for putting on the race, running with me, and being an inspiration. All of you who were there.... WAY TO GO! See all of you at Terrapin!!