

Dear David and everyone at Promise Land,

I just wanted to thank everyone involved in making the weekend so amazing!! This was my second ultra but my first "Horton" ultra. I was really nervous signing up for this event since I live on the Chesapeake Bay and have no way to really train for mountain running. My daughter and I traveled alone and camped at the starting line. We had a lot of fun at the campfire Friday night. We talked to "Sundial" about his time so far on the AT and didn't get to our tent until 11:00pm. Wow, I really don't remember the ground being so hard when I was a kid. I think I only slept three hours before hearing the alarm go off. After grabbing the best cup of pre-race coffee ever, we nervously stood at the starting line wondering what the day would bring. This is always my favorite time of the race, wondering about all the adventures about to unfold. Things unfolded up hill for quite a while, 12 miles I think to the aid station where my daughter worked for the rest of the day. The downhills in the next section were a lot of fun and I found out that I am a pretty good down hill runner. I ran through the next aid station since I heard that we would be making a loop and coming back to it. The loop was much longer than I thought it would be. I should have stopped.

When I finally popped back out to this aid station again I stopped because David said if we didn't we would "DIE." I mentioned to one of the ladies there that my lower back hurt and she was brave enough to lift up my soggy shirt and sprayed bio-freeze on me. What a life saver! Thank you!! I am so glad that I had no idea what was waiting for me in this next section. Apple Orchard Falls. Who came up with this name? It sounds so sweet. It's NOT. It's miles and miles of up hill. I overheard someone asking about stairs and wondered what they were talking about. Holy cow there they were ---Stairs. Out here in the forest. One hundred billion of them. Yes I counted them. People who run 100 milers are not the only people who hallucinate!! I think I saw Jacobs ladder and the angels coming and going from heaven. This is where I started to whine a little. One of the other runners (who was running Promise Land for the 10th time) had been encouraging me through the whole race was really giving me his best pep talk here.

I finally reached the parkway and there was my daughter. It was so good to see her. "It's all down hill from here" she said. So, I handed her my water bottle and took off. I know I have told her where liars go. It was not all down hill. It was a lot of up and down. The next aid station came quickly and from there it was only (I forgot) 2 or 3 miles. YES, I was going to make it. All of a sudden I just flew DOWN hill. I got this sudden surge of energy and ran the last few miles in 7 min. miles. It felt so good. I came to the parking lot and was so surprised to see David Horton there congratulating the runners as they crossed the finish line. I couldn't believe I felt so good after 34 grueling miles of mountain trails. The post race food was amazing. It was the best tasting hamburger I have ever had. I will definitely be running more "Horton" ultras in the future. It was painful but the course was so beautiful.

Thanks again,

Shelley Corrigan