

Going into the race, the longest run I had ever done was 16 miles, and the majority of my runs were done on flat pavement (which was a mistake ngl). With this, my only goal was to finish the race. And I did that! However, it was probably the most painful thing I ever did.

Everything up until the right before the third aid station (at apple orchard falls on blue ridge parkway) was fine. But before the aid station I swear I was gonna shit myself (I didn't even have a fiber one bar on Thursday or Friday!), and I didn't know there weren't going to be port-a-potties, so I went in the woods. It was my first time ever pooping in the woods, so it was very unnatural and uncomfortable. After going I made the mistake of putting extra effort in to catch my friends I was running with, and in doing so basically trashed my quads.

After I hit the aid station at the bottom of the hill, I had a pancake and I needed to poop again, though, so I went again. Second time pooping in the woods within the span of an hour! What a day! After that I wanted to catch up to my friends (once again), but I had reached ~17 miles, and every step was becoming my longest ever run and way too many hills (Wisconsin is nothing like that course. The only hills are the retired landfills that they turn into sledding hills). So naturally I was really starting to hurt. For a while I kept running, until ~mile 20, when we started going uphill. I had heard people earlier in the race saying, "be ready for the stairs," and I must've misheard them because I swear they were saying mile 22 is when the stairs are. So when I got to mile 22 I thought "where are the stairs!?" But we were going uphill so I thought it must be uphill and then just a little bit of stairs.

Either way, around mile 24 I was getting really slow. I started walking. I wanted to cry. I wanted to call my mom. I was listening to Dua Lipa, but she could only help me so much. But then I told myself I just need to follow someone and make sure I stick with them. So, I did! But then after ~5minutes of following them they turned around and yelled at me and said "You can't follow me. You need to pass me right now." And that really T-ed me off. I wanted to cry more, and I got mad at her so then I was rage running for a bit, making myself more tired. I started listening to Kanye to match my mood, and then I found another runner to follow, and she didn't yell at me and life was good but I was in pain. After a few miles I was to the Sunset Fields aid station (before the stairs), and my friends running had waited for me. Honestly, it cheered me up to see them, but I still was mad at that girl for yelling at me and think I might've deflected that on them. We started running again, but my friends took off. I blame it on their legs being longer than, but I was doing decent compared to most others.

My problem came after about a half mile when I realized I needed to poop again. I tried finding a good place but there wasn't enough cover so I just needed to hold it in. But then my back started hurting, which made me want to cry again, not gonna lie. At this point I realized my only option was to keep going. I just couldn't get over the fact that the race was 34 miles and I was only at mile 27. And when I looked up I couldn't even see the top! It really put a damper on me. People always say "wow, you did the stair stepper for 45 minutes!" but I guess that wasn't enough for this. It was just such a long

hill. And I hit the stone steppers/stairs and thought “oh, I must almost be there!” but I wasn’t! And then I hit the actual stairs and was so tired I started bear crawling up them. I also started thinking I was going to fall down—like my feet weren’t moving in a straight line. Would’ve been pulled over if I was caught walking in a mall like that.

And I went off course; instead of turning I went straight and then was like “BS! No way this is part of the course!” but then I turned around and saw where other people were going. Another thing that made me POed. Anyway, when I got back on course I saw the girl who told me there aren’t port-a-potties on the course (She teaches at liberty, name is Allissa Keith), so talked to her for a sentence or two. Awkward interaction though. I was like “are you the person I asked if there were port-a-potties on the course? And she was like “yep” and then I was like “yeah I pooped two times” (why’d I say that? So awkward!) and then I asked how much longer to the top and she said half a mile. And it killed the vibe because the people half a mile ago said half a mile.

I got to the top though, and I wanted to drop out, but I wouldn’t let myself drop out, and then other friends were there and they were like “Harrison you need to eat this salty potato (honesty tasted really good in hindsight) and I ate it and then a guy at the aid station said I need to stand up and move otherwise my body is gonna seize. And I made myself get up, and sulked off onto the course, and then all of a sudden Allissa was with me and I asked if I could run with her, she said yes, so I did, and then she told me to pass her (not in a mean way though), and then this guy came by us and was like “4 miles left, ten minute pace and it’ll only be 45 minutes” And that once again t-ed me off because it was false on so many levels. After a bit I was walking, even though it was downhill again, and then Allissa passed me again, and she was like “nope! You need to keep running!” so I did and then I before I knew it I was done and wondering if it was actually that painful.

And I drove home the ‘03 odyssey (whose catalytic converters is gone) using two feet because my right foot was twitching. I also got this sandwich that slapped but hurt the roof of my mouth for some reason. There was a weird spider crawling on my hand too. And then later that night I realized I should’ve been having White Claws while running because it numbs the pain, and if you drink it with the right amount of water/Gatorade with it you stay hydrated.

And then yesterday I tried on my shorts and they were kind of small because my glutes are too powerful, but once I get them on they fit fine. Also they don’t have pockets in them. Not complaining, just a note.