

Ultra Story starts at Bottom

that Nancy is not a runner but she gave most of a perfectly good Saturday to stand out in the cold and give small cups of water to grunting, sweating runners. When I returned from giving three-mile splits about a tenth of a mile away, she had most of the half ton of clothing folded neatly and put away in stacks in the back of the car. Nancy added a very nice touch. Planning on an extended wait before the runners returned, I stripped down to bare running essentials and started the second race of the day—the first annual Levy Run Single Participant Four Miler. I felt like I was in another world just being in the wildlife refuge, but as I took off down the dirt roads of the levees I ventured into yet another world. In minutes I found myself on a road surrounded by water on both sides; to the right the water blended into marshes, fading into the horizon and to the left in the distance I could see part of the race course. With the exception of a jet flying overhead, the only sounds I heard were the flapping of hundreds of duck wings, an occasional cry from a seagull and my own breathing. Upon completion of my race, won slowly and happily by me, I returned to the car to find Nancy holding down the fort. A few minutes' rest and then back to work. Rick Miller, the leader since the start, came by my fifteen-mile post at approximately one hour and twenty-four minutes, followed four minutes later by Terry Presnell and Shannon Sullivan. In hot pursuit was Ernie McKee, who confirmed at this point that he was no longer on an easy training run. Laura Ledbetter showed up a few minutes later with a strong command of the women's race. Before long more runners appeared with the strain of fifteen miles reflected in their faces. I had to assure many of them that the buzzards circling overhead were not there for them ("*They've got a girlfriend in the woods*"). I was not very reassuring. Upon arrival of the last runner and the inhabitants of six-mile island, Nancy drove the aid station back to the start-finish area, leaving us to run back (voluntarily, of course). Once we returned we found out, of course, that Rick had won but McKee had battled Presnell and taken second, with Shannon claiming fourth. Laura won the women's race, while coming in seventh overall.

At this point it was evident that Tony's worrying had paid off. He had successfully moved this race from Natural Bridge to St. Marks, adding more variety to the Gulf Winds race calendar. The entry fee was a little higher because Tony wished to run the race without the aid of a sponsor. (This resulted in a high quality, tastefully printed T-shirt without advertising or a lighthouse wearing running shoes.) Tony kept the race low-key in mood but high quality in organization.

Saturday night, after the race, I was back in the real world at my real world part-time job at a local running store. Fellow worker Rick Miller and I were talking about the day's activities when he summed up the general mood of the race: "I was running by myself between four and five miles when a deer ran out in the road ahead of me. I got really excited; I wish I had my camera with me! It kept running for about thirty or forty yards before taking off into the woods." I don't know if this little episode added anything to Rick's overall performance, but it was a nice story and definitely something that wouldn't happen while running laps around Messer Field.

—BILL BUCKLAND

Prelude: This was the second year we had come to Wakulla Springs to run the Ultra. Its location and environment make it the ideal place to run, flat, fast and NO traffic along with good roads on a short loop.

Registration: As race director I can feel that we might have a good race today. I've invited the Georgia champion at fifty miles, Kenneth Lord, to come down and he's here. The defending champion, Dave Sheffield, is back and in better shape than last year; however, Dave has not had the Ultra-training he had a year ago. John Hesselbart, a methodical runner, has trained well, had PR's at a number of distances and is serious about the 100K. Returning runners from last year, Ed Davis, John Stug and Ed Desloge, all are ready and are registered for the 100K.

We have some first-time Ultra runners to register, one of them a woman. Rosemary Desloge, whose longest run is 18 miles (longest ever), is here. Also Gordon Hawkins, a 2:48 marathoner from Madeira Beach, has come up to join Ed Johnson from Tally and Robert Dubay from Bainbridge. Richard Williams is here also but doesn't expect to finish—just get a good workout—but pays his entry fee—thanks Richard. I'm happy and excited about the field of eleven but disappointed also because there was a lot more interest by at least a dozen other Tallahassee runners. Maybe next year.

Lee Cohee and Tec Thomas arrive at 6:00 AM and plan to work the race with me—all day. George and Virginia Rinehard return and also will help out. And after last-minute instructions to the runners, Lee, Tec and I start our watches at the command of "Go". The watches and runners are off for a long day of running.

The Race: The course is two loops of one mile each followed by sixteen loops of 3 miles each.

At the first mile Kenneth Lord starts fast for a 6:11 mile followed by Hawkins, Dave Sheffield and Richard Williams all under 7 minutes. Seven-minute pace for 50 miles is sub 6-hour Ultramarathoning—national class kind of pace. The rest of the field settles into their pre-determined pace for the race.

20 Miles: Kenneth Lord is leading at 20 miles having run a 2:08:17 for 6:24 pace. He's only 4 minutes ahead of Gordon Hawkins. This is a real surprise since Hawkins' best marathon is 2:48 and Lord's is 2:34. I sense that maybe Hawkins is going out a little fast and Lord is on pace. Lord's prediction before the race is 5:30 something. Sheffield and Williams are right on pace for their sub 6-hour 50 miler and I expect that Dave at least will be able to hold this pace; however, it would be about a 30-minute improvement for him and while not impossible would be a nice piece of work. Hesselbart has been running for a while with John Stug and Rosemary Desloge. At 2:37 for 20 miles this time looks great for a nice finish. John is running the 100K also and knows what it's all about, having run the 50 last year and done some 30s in training. Rosemary, on the other hand, is a novice having never run anything longer than 30K, and it's all new to her. She only wants to finish the marathon distance and maybe continue to 50 miles. Stug has been with the other 2 but now is starting to drop back some. Maybe John is having trouble and with 30 to go it's no place to feel bad.

Ed Davis, Ed Johnson and Robert Dubay all look good. Ed Desloge has a 17-minute pace going. This may sound a little slow but Ed knows what he's doing. If one is not trained to run long distances, by alternating walking and running one can cover distances otherwise impossible. Desloge has only been doing 5 to 6 miles per day in training.

Topic: Tallahassee Ultramarathon—50 miles and 100K

Date: Jan. 9, 1982

Location: Wakulla Springs, Florida—15 miles south of Tallahassee, a wildlife refuge and resort—secluded, good roads, no traffic

Weather: Clear 39° at the start—warmed to 55°—perfect weather

To the Finish: Lord does the marathon in 2:49. Slowing only slightly to 6:36 pace for the next 15 miles, he is then slowed by cramps and has to walk and run the next 6 miles. But at the gun lap he recovers for a 6:30 pace for the next 3 miles and finishes in 6:42 overall for a 5 hour, 39 minute, 43 second 50 miler. This will be in the top 15 times nationally for the year, based on previous years' results. Kenneth also owns the Georgia State Record for 50.

At 26 miles Dave Sheffield is 8 minutes behind the 2nd place man and is beginning to feel the pace. He slows over the next few laps from doing each lap at 7-minute pace to 7.5-, then 8-minute pace. Dave manages to slip into 2nd place just after 38 miles and puts some distance on his rival. Finishing in 6:18:20 for a new PR by nine minutes is small consolation because he really feels the effects of the miles. Seven-minute 33-second pace for 50 miles is good effort and will give Dave national ranking.

John Hesselbart is slightly under 8-minute pace at 26 miles and manages to hold about even pace for the rest of the 50 for slightly over 8-minute pace at 6:43:45 and 3rd place. An even effort for 50 miles but the 12 miles, 240 yards remain for the 100K finish. John slows dramatically to 10-minute pace then to 15-minute pace per mile. Finishing the 59th mile he looks great though, and I run the last 3 miles plus with him at 8.5-minute pace for an excellent clocking at 8:57:57 for 100K. This also is a time for national ranking.

Fourth place goes to Gordon Hawkins who has slowed dramatically from his early 6.5-minute pace. From 8-minute pace to 10 minute to 11 minute per mile he slows but finishes at 6:51:30 for a good time overall.

Fifth place is claimed by Ed Johnson. He's a first-time ultra man and is running properly, one minute slower than his per mile average for the marathon. Still he slows to 10-minute then 11-minute pace and finishes in 8:04:14. No national ranking but still a good time.

Sixth place gives to Robert Dubay from Bainbridge, GA. He is to run today 50 miles and it's 50 miles by car to the race from his house—fifty miles is a long way. His best marathon is 4 hours, which makes his almost double marathon today of 8:13 a great time for him. He's only been running a short while and plans to run another race, a marathon, in two weeks. This man has natural talent as a runner.

Rosemary Desloge has averaged 40 miles per week for the past few months. To finish a marathon on this mileage for me would be difficult yet she remarkably does the marathon distance in 3:27 and continues on to fifty miles in 8:15:45 for seventh place overall. Having slowed after 26 miles to run with her dad only to "get tired of going slow" and pick up the pace for a wonderful finish. Her time would place her in the top 20 women in the nation at fifty miles.

Ed Davis has a plan today, run 20 minutes, walk 5. From the first loop to the last his plan works. Ed's time for 50 miles is 8:23:56 for over a 30-minute improvement. Continuing on to 100K Ed begins to "fall apart" at 55 miles but finishes in 11:15:45. Always looking for "the mile I haven't run before" maybe he'll find it in his next planned Ultra run, the Cross Florida 118-mile run.

Ed Desloge also employs the walk-run approach to Ultras. This is the recommended method for those not properly trained for the "long one." Some might call it slow, I call it smart. Ed could probably do very well at 100 miles and 24 hours—at least I know he's mentally tough enough. He finishes in 11:11:55 for fifty. Superb.

Two runners, Williams and Stug, only run the marathon today. Twenty-six seems to be enough for the day. Maybe next year.

Epilogue: It's finally over and I can't wait till next year. Maybe we'll see you there. A man, a newspaper reporter, remarked to me about the race and allowed that it was strange behavior for people to run that far. My reply was that I thought that maybe for him it would be strange, but for those running the Tallahassee Ultra it was the most natural and normal thing for them to do.

—ANDY BURNS

KEEPING TRACK

Business Meeting Minutes
Thursday, January 14, 1982
Governor's Square

Board Members Present: Dave Rogers, Don Wilson, Bill Davis, Mike Eakin, Bill de Grummond, and Shannon Sullivan. Other members included Shirley Bull, Mae Cleveland, Rex Cleveland, John de Grummond, Steve Griffith, Linda Meade, Steve Meade, Dot Skofronik, and Tec Thomas.

Dave Rogers announced the recent expansion of Newsletter staff to include Steve Griffith, Charles Harshbarger, Thaxton Springfield and Tec Thomas. Steve Griffith has been designated to replace Dan Haskin as the new GWTC Fleetfoot Editor.

Members approved \$350.00 for GWTC Banquet awards. Regretfully, Olympian Jeff Galloway will not be able to attend this year's banquet.

Several race directors requested GWTC assistance: Co-directors Steve Meade and Mae Cleveland were granted \$400.00 to cover costs for the Capital City Marathon on February 13. Shirley Bull ask for volunteers to help with the Fla. Lung Assoc. 5K at Messer Field on Feb. 27. Springtime Tallahassee 10K Director Don Wilson stressed need for persons to serve as traffic controllers on race day April 3.

Shannon Sullivan shared his ideas for developing a five race series comprised of a 5K, 10K, 15K, 20K, and a 30K race. While each race would be individually sponsored, all five events would be viewed as a single financial entity. For example, profits of the larger races would go to offset the costs of the smaller races, or discount rates might be offered for multiple race entries.

Members moved to renew this year's RRCA insurance policy while considering other policies for next year.