

Michael Brown

Race report? Why not? Daytona 100. I chose the 50 miler. 19 months ago, I ran my first 5k after a really brief couch to 5k program. At that time an ultra marathon seemed totally impossible. So I signed up for this when it was first announced and then had months to agonize over my own abilities. Training was sparse, between working so much and trying to have a family life. I managed maybe two long runs over the summer and DNF'ed one of those. I went into it feeling undertrained and unprepared.

The start of the race was hot. The first 20 miles sucked. I was going easy, hovering between an 11 and 12 minute pace. But when I got my first leg cramp at mile 10, I was like, oh hell no. So I eased back even more figuring I could make up time after the sun went down. Miles 20 to 30 were pretty good. I actually enjoyed it. Cruising through Flagler Beach, seeing people really helped. I was taking in nutrition and fluids pretty well. But the fatigue was setting in and when I rolled into the aid station 8, (30 miles), I felt pretty wrecked. I changed shoes and hit the road again.

The best part of the entire run happened shortly after that. I ran past our hotel and [Amy](#), Mollie and Lars came out to see me. It fueled me to continue on, so I did.

I can honestly say the last 20 miles [stunk]. I couldn't wait to get to the 5 mile beach section. Then things really fell apart. By now I couldn't stomach anything but water, and barely that. The 5 mile stretch of that beach at night will forever stand as the most unenjoyable running experience of my life. My legs hurt beyond description. I was nauseous, disoriented and have never wanted to just sit down so bad in all my life. A few texts to Amy about where I was helped reconnect me to the real world.

Finally came off the beach to the last aid station and just grabbed more water. 6.5 miles left. Didn't seem like much, but I was out of gas. Totally bonked out and running on god knows what. The stretch of neighborhood in Ponce Inlet was nice. It was quiet and dark, and it

rained some, which felt great.

Then, the last two miles of beach to the finish were surreal. I was just waking by now. No run left in my legs. I knew Amy and the kids were at the finish line, and it kept me going. All I wanted was to just be motionless and see my family.

Crossing the finish line of my first 50 was amazing. All I wanted to do was finish, but I have to proudly say I placed 8th overall, 6th top male and FIRST in my age group with a time of 12 hours and 13 minutes. Not bad for a former couch potato.

I have to thank Amy for always being supportive of me. Her support and understanding is everything to me. I also have to thank all my friends in the running community. I could name so many names, but if you've ran with me, you've inspired me in some way. I look at all of you in awe and amazement.

I'd also like to bid a tearful farewell to my left big toenail. It's on its way out.