



Ode to My Crew

BY JEN SCHALLER

Friends, family, a chosen few
My lifeline, my support,
my 100-mile ultramarathon crew
Before the sun, the car is packed
Blanket, clothes, food, water, aid,
soon to be ransacked

We roll out, begin the day,
My crew: Trent, Tim, Brandon,
Clyde and Ray
No turning back and
no shutting down
I'm out there alone and I'm headed
to the next town

In the car, out of the car; 24 hours
Chilly, windy, dreary day, all bundled
up and more rain showers
I hear no complaints
only smiles and aid
Adventurous, selfless, generous
souls, embracing the crusade

Do they even know,
do they have a clue?
They are my oasis, my refuge, my joy,
my reason to continue
I'll soldier on, because I know
They are out there, the Cavalry,
waiting to bring me home



I Feel Like I've Been Hit by a Bus... and I Can't Stop Grinning

BY JEN SCHALLER



Why Prairie Spirit 100? Because it fell on March 25, my 47th birthday. This was my third attempt at 100 miles. I wanted to prove that "I've still got it" on my birthday. Why couldn't I have a normal mid-life crisis like everybody else?

Prairie Spirit 100 is a flat, rails-to-trails course, on a crushed limestone path. No changes in terrain means there's no switching the muscles used and no altering your footing. Same muscles firing, same impact, same, same, same...for 100 miles. I tried to mentally prepare for boredom. Instead of mountains, streams, roots, and foliage, I prepared for a mind-numbing, flat, long run.

The race director began to make announcements and started with, "100-mile runners, we are 30 minutes out." I got a shiver down my spine that made me shudder. *Oh hell...*

this is happening. I listened to the instructions like my life depended on it. Ten minutes out, I walked like a zombie to the start line. I told myself, "I'm going to be okay."

The starting horn blew and we started moving. Within a short period of time, I was on the trail in the dark and looking forward to the day. Boy, was I wrong about this course; it was beautiful! There were tree-lined sections, fields of tiny purple flowers, blooming trees, farmland, cattle herds, and quaint little towns. I was feeling mostly good and thoroughly enjoying my birthday run. When I reached my crew, they asked what I needed and it quickly appeared. They gave me much-needed encouragement. Mile after mile. Aid station after aid station. I felt an abundance of love for my awesome crew, and it carried me for many miles. Then the pain set in. Painful hours went by. Painful miles went by.

At mile 86.5, I was still running when I could and walking when the pain was too much. I was wet, cold, tired, aching, and pissed at the wind. But there was

ABOVE: Jason Bement (Collinsville, Oklahoma) and Kathy Bratton (Tulsa, Oklahoma) cross the 100-mile finish line with an assist from a bear (wearing the requisite black pacer bib). (© Rick Mayo/Mile 90 Photography)

LEFT: Jen Schaller (author of race report & poem) and her crew at the finish. (© Rick Mayo/Mile 90 Photography)

RIGHT: Chrissy Whitten of Sand Springs, Oklahoma, and her handlers, honor the 100-mile finish with a selfie. (© Kristi Mayo/Mile 90 Photography)



nobody trying to pull me off the course, so I was not stopping. By mile 93, things went south and I could no longer run. I looked down and my left knee was taking on fluid. Not good.

During mile 97, things took a turn for the worse. A frozen right foot and ankle restricted all running. In addition to my right-side issues, I had shooting pain in my left shin when I tried to run, and my left knee still had fluid. I hobbled along at a snail's pace. I was hurting worse than ever... but then it happened: everything else was stripped away... down to my core... and I was not giving up! "There is no way in hell that I'm not finishing this! I will scrape my way across the finish line using my front teeth if I have to. I'm doing this!"

I finished my first 100-miler in 24:35:32. I felt like I had been hit by a bus... but like most good stories, it ended with a shiny buckle. 🏆

Prairie Spirit

Ottawa, KS // March 25

🏃 1.2* // 100 Miles,
50 Miles, 50k

Elevation gain: Flat | Both courses are out-and-backs on a flat rails-to-trails course, primarily on crushed limestone gravel, with small sections of asphalt when the trail passes through small towns. The trail is wide enough in most sections to comfortably run three abreast.

100 MILES

1	Chavet Breslin, 35, CO	17:41:17
2	Christopher Benjamin, 41, MO	19:50:47
3	Rolfe Schmidt, 44, AR	20:33:59
4	Krystle Dalke, 34, KS	21:03:51
5	Mike Smith, 59, NM	21:15:51
6	Aaron Baldwin, 35, KS	21:44:38
7	Lisa Hayen, 42, CO	22:13:57
8	Jason Streubel, 43, MO	22:24:04
9	Tyler Patterson, 32, KS	22:31:51
10	William Sprouse, 47, KS	22:37:19
11	Tim Mahler, 56, IL	22:50:51
12	Troy Gilmore, 35, NE	23:00:12
13	Tiffany Reed, 53, MO	23:01:51
14	Matt Markel, 35, OK	23:07:27
15	Jordan Schmidt, 22, MN	23:18:58
16	Heather Blake, 38, OK	23:22:17
17	Brandon Plate, 16, OK	23:22:18
18	Adam Monaghan, 34, KS	23:36:28
19	Melissa Martinez, 46, MO	23:56:24
20	Quynhanh Nguyen, 37, KS	24:19:23
21	Jen Schaller, 47, IL	24:35:32
22	Russell Bennett, 45, OK	25:09:54
23	Farhad Zarif, 47, KS	25:36:13
24	Matthew Watts, 60, CO	25:41:40
25	Greg Gray, 46, NE	25:53:31
26	Charity Larson, 41, CO	25:54:00

27	Allison Bruchhaus, 34, PA	25:54:55
28	Brian Pilgrim, 50, NM	25:58:58
29	Christopher Baca, 44, NM	26:05:56
30	Bryan Carpenter, 44, OK	26:49:05
31	Tait Robinson, 39, NC	26:51:07
32	Dennis Crosby, 70, NC	27:04:33
33	Jeff Williams, 50, MO	27:13:07
34	Dan Wells, 52, MO	27:13:09
35	Ralph Mills, 37, CO	27:19:15
36	David Tatham, 31, CO	27:19:15
37	Kathy Bratton, 56, OK	27:38:37
38	Jason Bement, 38, OK	27:38:37
39	Clint Green, 41, OK	27:44:58
40	Chinyere Obasi, 55, NE	27:49:41
41	Chrissy Whitten, 38, OK	27:50:06
42	Fiona Lu, 41, TX	27:57:12
43	Faith Mayabb, 42, TX	27:57:12
44	Alex Ross, 39, CO	28:07:55
45	Adele Jordan, 34, KS	28:08:00
46	Keri Jackson, 36, KS	28:55:06
47	Michael Davis, 46, TX	29:49:34
48	Tek Ung, 35, RI	29:49:34

50 MILES

1	Eric Tripp, 36, MO	7:20:36
2	Abel Shaw, 38, IA	7:21:54
3	Jennifer Valentine, 34, CO	7:38:06
4	Toby Valentine, 36, CO	7:38:06
5	Aaron Wheelock, 36, IA	7:48:45
6	Amy Alexander, 35, OK	8:02:19
7	Travis Jewell, 34, NE	8:18:48
8	Adam Kahle, 25, NE	8:19:48
9	Lindsey Heaberlin, 31, MO	8:21:34
10	Susanne Kennedy, 40, IA	9:20:58
11	Ally Hunter, 30, AR	9:20:58
12	Brian Rickard, 34, AR	9:33:19
13	Shane Hosier, 42, CA	9:52:01
14	Eric Rawls, 27, AR	9:54:48
15	Paul Countess, 43, OK	9:54:56

16	Brian Bailey, 39, AR	9:56:48
17	Richard Brenner, 59, IL	10:02:43
18	Steve Wayant, 51, OK	10:25:09
19	Brian Ray, 27, KS	10:54:32
20	Dennis Stewart, 68, MO	11:34:21
21	Patrick Campbell, 33, MO	12:58:33
22	Brian Heili, 44, KS	13:03:08
23	Rosie Saiz, 27, KS	13:43:49
24	Ginger Schmidt, 44, NE	13:46:38
25	Nancy Bauer, 55, SD	13:46:39
26	Blair Humphrey, 32, NE	13:46:39
27	Misty Pilgrim, 52, NM	15:26:01

50K

1	Ryan Moore, 33, MO	4:29:50
2	Nicholas Younts, 32, MO	4:29:51
3	Danny Hale, 45, MO	4:58:54
4	Ryan Lorenzen, 33, MO	5:04:50
5	Tim Metcalf, 47, MO	5:13:00
6	Cameron Plate, 15, OK	5:19:31
7	Carrie Grant, 39, NE	5:42:54
8	Alicja Grace, 34, CA	5:56:05
9	Derek Ringer, 36, KS	5:58:52
10	Maggie Sater, 28, KS	6:18:00
11	Christine Harrison, 58, CA	6:26:19
12	John Schumann, 44, NY	6:41:16
13	Jay Magiera, 49, NY	6:41:16
14	Gary Born, 64, IA	6:47:37
15	Chandy Davidson, 40, MO	7:00:47
16	Stephen Rodgers, 49, CO	7:00:47
17	Mario Gonzales, 34, KS	7:19:13
18	Pedro Lievanos, 34, KS	7:19:14
19	Donna Stucky, 54, KS	7:22:33
20	Todd Segreaves, 36, KS	7:41:06
21	Dick Lipsey, 71, CO	7:49:21
22	Susan Drummond, 49, KS	8:22:05
23	Paula White, 45, KS	8:22:08
24	Cathy Troisi, 70, NY	9:14:55

*See page 64 for key

I am ASTRAL

THE VEST THAT PROVIDES FIT AND STYLE FOR WOMEN

MAX O2 Sternum™

Quick in and out hook that provides a better range of motion.

Curve™ harness

Designed to free the chest from the pressure of pockets, weight, bounce and excess fabric.



Ultraspire