



Find Another Way

BY SEAN LEWIS



My whole life has been spent looking for that next adventure. Finding ways to challenge myself while at the same time trying to live my best life possible and lift others up. I was born with cerebral palsy 36 years ago and have spent 30 of those years using an electric wheelchair to be as independent as possible.

In January 2018, I joined Ainsley's Angels of Oklahoma, a group whose sole mission is one of inclusion by giving those with disabilities a taste of endurance events. We have special racing chairs that we are pushed in by some amazing runners with huge hearts. I have been blessed to do many runs – 5ks, 10ks, half marathons and even an ultramarathon. It is truly amazing and I love it, but before my first run I wasn't sure how I would feel. What would I get out of just sitting in a chair while someone ran their heart out while pushing me? It isn't easy pushing someone – just ask even the most seasoned runner who has pushed for the very first time. It is a lot of work, and here I am sitting while they work so hard.

I needed to have some kind of purpose in this – a role to play, some way I felt like I could contribute to my team. It wasn't long

until I figured out what that was. If nothing else, if they were the physical side of the team, I would be the heart, the encourager and the one who helped them keep going. I am good at that. It comes naturally to me, and I wanted them to know how much I appreciated what they did for me – and for all of us.

Over many runs, I have had the pleasure of being paired with and meeting so many awesome people whom I now consider my good friends. Then there is a guy, Micah Bevins, who I was paired in my fourth run. He pushed me all by himself in a 10k, without any help. He's an amazing athlete and even more amazing human being. I always looked forward to the runs we would do together. He and I would grow to be great friends and I would share with him my dreams and goals. I had big ones in this field, and so did he. Micah treated me like I was just any other guy, not someone with a disability who he was nice to. I respected and loved that.

We had talked a little about doing something bigger together someday, but the day he texted me about a 100-miler he had coming up and would I like to suffer through it with him, was one day I won't forget. Here it was, something I could really test myself in and

While Micah Bevins (left) ran the entire distance with Sean, the other team members provided support in shorter stints. Here Justin Walker pushes and Kathy Bratton gets some miles in. [© Rick Mayo/Mile 90 Photography]

see what I was made of. That was the same reason he wanted to do it, so the planning began.

The weather, of course, was a factor with rain in the forecast – something that could really put a huge damper on our success. Micah chose this trail because it is on the flatter side, but pushing over a rained-soaked trail could be the one thing that would hamper our chances of success. Meanwhile, Micah spoke with Kathy Bratton, a mutual, dear friend to both of us, and together they assembled a team that consisted of themselves and two other badass athletes, Justin Walker and Dave Box.

The day finally arrived, and the weather was every bit or worse than we were afraid of. The morning of the run, everything that could have happened, did. After the soaking rain prior to the race, pushing my chair along the trail was said to be like pushing a sled in wet sand – deplorable and excruciatingly



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:
Ainsley's Angels works to
ensure everyone can experience
endurance events. [© Kristi Mayo/
Mile 90 Photography]

Sean Lewis (riding), Micah Bevins
(pushing) and Kathy Bratton run
through rain and snow early in the
100-mile race. [© Rick Mayo/Mile 90
Photography]

Sean is greeted at the finish line
by his mother. [© Kristi Mayo/Mile 90
Photography]

Sean Lewis rolls into the finish
line with half of his team Kathy
Bratton (left) and Micah Bevins
(right). [© Kristi Mayo/Mile 90
Photography]

Sean takes a break at an aid
station with his crew chief (mom).
[© Rick Mayo/Mile 90 Photography]

difficult. The temps were
freezing and the Kansas winds
blew consistently at 20-30 mph
throughout the day. Rain turned
into snow with the temps falling
into the teens overnight. My
team was being tested, and we
had many hours to go. We had
a flat tire, which luckily – due
to Micah's quick thinking – we
were able to replace with a tire off
of a backup chair that we brought.
We even had a stray dog chase
us at two different times, adding
another element of difficulty we
usually don't experience. It was
grueling, and yet my team just
kept on, never calling it quits.

As for me, I sat in that chair
for well over 28 hours, never
getting out or being able to repo-
sition. I was as cold as anyone
else, unable to generate any heat
on my own by moving. I didn't
sleep and was severely limited
to what I had to eat or drink
in the effort to try and control
the need to go to the bathroom.
I learned a lot and it will be
useful if I ever get the chance to
do another. It was okay because
I was committed to the challenge
and had already decided that
whatever my team had to endure,
I would too.

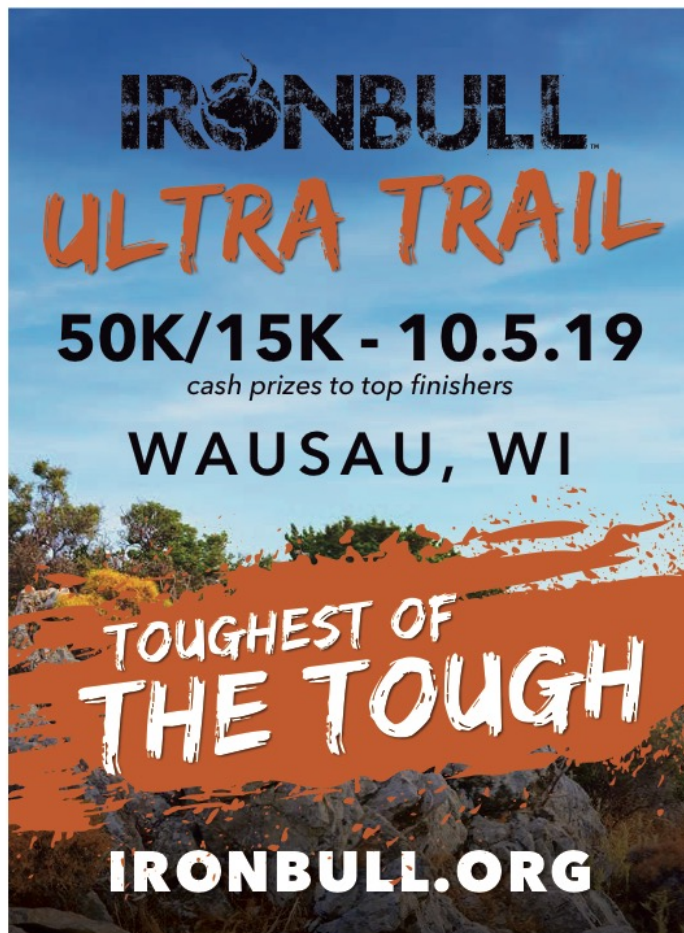
Kathy had to eventually drop
out after pushing for over 60
miles. She had just recently

gotten over the flu and was not
even close to being 100% when
she committed to helping us. In
spite of that, she would jump
back in and help through the
end of the race. I know she was
as concerned for Micah as I was.
She wanted to make sure she
supported him. Justin and Dave
made the whole thing possible as
they took turns with sections at
a time, each running or pushing
about 30 miles.

What a team I had. Micah was
running or pushing the entire
100 miles. He was the one who
had given me the chance to do
this amazing thing and was in
it the whole time. Hero status
in my eyes. I owe him so much.
That last little bit when we were
near the finish, he even had the
presence of mind to lean over
and pull my stocking cap back
off my face and eyes where it
kept falling so I would look good
coming across the finish. That's
Micah for you – even though he
was probably near collapsing, he
thought of me.

I will never, ever forget the
feeling that came over me when
we rolled across the finish. It
was an overwhelming surge of
emotion and I fought hard to
hold back the tears. When my
mom came over to me smiling,
so proud of me and of our team,
I almost lost it. She knew what
that moment meant to me.

An added bonus was that
we made a little history that
day, being the first team of all
the Ainsley's Angels chapters
across America to finish a run
that long. In fact, we were told
by the race director that we were
the first team of our kind to ever
attempt, much less finish, one
on their trails. Micah and Kathy,
Justin and Dave, did this for me –
for us. I can never thank them
enough. They will probably never
understand what this meant to
me and I will never be the same.
From now on, my definition of
what is possible has changed.
All things are possible to those
who believe. Like I say when I am
speaking somewhere, "All things
are possible. Sometimes all you
have to do is find another way!" 🏃



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Prairie Spirit Trail

Ottawa, KS // March 30

**1,2* // 100 Miles, 100k,
50 Miles, 50k**

Elevation gain/loss: 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	Rolfe Schmidt, 46, AR	15:42:53
2	Miguel Arellano, 38, KS	17:17:05
3	Ashley Truan, 35, MI	17:46:21
4	Amy Alexander, 37, OK	17:51:13
5	Kelcy Brunner, 29, AL	19:50:55
6	Elaine Stypula, 53, MI	20:56:27
7	David Callison, 59, IA	21:12:38
8	Shana LeNeveu, 48, CO	22:29:17
9	Tiffany Reed, 55, MO	22:31:22
10	Kurt Mueller, 67, NE	22:43:49
11	Jimmy Fetter, 47, OK	22:45:57
12	Chavet Breslin, 37, CO	23:14:12
13	Chris Hines, 38, MO	23:22:41
14	Timmy Treon, 45, MO	23:33:43
15	Mandy Ozimek, 39, AR	23:42:46
16	William Sprouse, 49, KS	23:56:26
17	Mark Goehner, 53, KS	24:26:03
18	Charity Larson, 43, CO	24:32:38
19	Brian Scantlin, 44, KS	24:34:56
20	Caryl Geschwind, 53, MN	24:37:12
21	Arnold Begay, 56, OK	24:56:14
22	Matthew Watts, 62, CO	25:39:39
23	Kathy Errthum, 42, WI	25:54:58
24	Sean Lewis, 36, OK	27:05:51
25	Micah Bevins, 41, OK	27:05:51
26	Lara Gonzalez, 44, NY	27:47:54
27	Brian Steinberg, 40, MI	28:25:31
28	Maurice Robinson, 77, AR	28:42:38
29	John Taylor, 57, MN	28:45:34
30	Tony Brown, 58, KS	28:53:12
31	Ed Peters, 67, CT	28:56:36
32	Michael Ortiz, 35, NY	29:01:44
33	Chrissie O'Brien, 44, AZ	29:02:50
34	Anthony Spahn, 47, KY	29:51:22

100K

1	Mark Hammond, 33, UT	8:34:56
2	Marcia Dority Baker, 41, NE	11:27:13
3	Stephanie Turner, 46, AR	12:16:20
4	Melissa Weigand, 53, OK	13:26:27
5	Rick Felix, 54, AZ	13:26:41
6	Tim Schuessler, 40, IL	14:03:06
7	Lisa Johnson, 35, MO	14:03:07
8	Nathan Goertzen, 43, NE	14:23:16
9	Michael Bergen, 35, NE	14:23:16
10	Sean Evans, 44, KS	15:21:37
11	Rachel Baker, 40, MO	15:43:05
12	Ken Jackson, 42, KS	15:43:56
13	Greg Gray, 48, NE	15:57:27
14	Olin Parker, 34, LA	16:15:53
15	Jordan Couturier, 35, KS	17:06:10
16	Jonus Gerrits, 48, OK	17:57:55
17	Witek Grzymala-Busse, 46, KS	18:13:04
18	Jennifer Cavazos, 42, KS	18:52:46
19	Rosie Salz, 29, KS	19:23:19
20	Dennis Crosby, 72, OK	19:51:46

50 MILES

1	Maksym Cheliev, 29, IN	6:03:57
2	Brady Poskin, 33, MO	6:53:00
3	Hans Van Zanten, 45, MO	7:10:09
4	Bethany Praska, 29, IA	7:28:50
5	Wyatt Hockmeyer, 38, OK	7:58:49
6	Tim Roetman, 46, IA	8:04:41
7	Kelly Vander Esch, 42, IA	8:12:12
8	Ashley Stevenson, 33, KS	8:19:20
9	David Mason, 32, TX	8:59:06
10	Jeff Swift, 50, KS	9:21:52
11	John Snethen, 32, OK	9:26:06
12	Cary Travnichek, 50, KS	9:29:54
13	Gary Craig, 31, KS	9:34:06
14	Kristin Mock, 29, MO	9:42:09
15	Aaron Whaley, 38, TX	9:45:23
16	Ethan Harrington, 39, KS	9:51:28
17	Bill Heath, 62, MO	9:52:02
18	Crystal Foust, 29, NE	9:55:33
19	Judi Hayashi, 56, KS	9:57:58
20	Tim Adams, 42, CO	9:58:36

21	Erich Schaefer, 58, KS	10:03:16
22	Dean Panovich, 51, KS	10:20:47
23	Julia Sickle, 25, KS	10:26:43
24	Aron Moriarty, 48, KS	10:34:09
25	David Lenz, 60, MN	10:35:17
26	Deborah Burkart Catch, 53, OK	10:37:51
27	Amber Harris, 39, OK	10:41:37
28	Dave Meeth, 55, KS	10:43:02
29	Jody Stutzman, 34, NE	10:43:13
30	Chuck Lewis, 55, OK	10:50:43
31	Janet Holland, 57, OK	10:51:26
32	Eric Steele, 53, KS	10:54:09
33	Shane Cantin, 49, MO	10:54:29
34	Dennis Freeman, 56, TN	11:09:55
35	Larin Davis, 25, OK	11:18:09
36	Vincent Taege, 44, IA	11:23:31
37	Catherine Berberich, 34, NC	11:38:48
38	Glen Avery, 68, NY	11:46:41
39	Steven Wagner, 50, MO	11:52:30
40	Stacey Eggers, 52, MO	11:56:14
41	Jenn Tosic, 36, NE	12:03:34
42	Melinda Slings, 39, IA	12:03:34
43	Joseph Kilzer, 48, NE	12:03:35
44	Brad Ward, 42, SC	12:27:10
45	Michael Haviland, 77, GA	12:43:08
46	Aaron Burlingame, 43, TX	12:43:28
47	Jeff Grabbe, 48, KS	12:46:12
48	Celia Whelan, 26, KS	12:49:33
49	Rick Bruce, 50, KS	13:26:16
50	Paul Hofmann, 68, MA	14:07:24
51	Isaac McNary, 32, KS	14:13:50
52	Angel Long, 24, GA	14:29:52
53	Susan Bitner, 47, MO	14:30:33
54	Carol Neslund, 57, CO	14:33:12
55	Jennifer Gurnsey, 31, KS	15:14:14
56	Sierra Marcus, 37, OK	16:43:34
57	Rebecca James, 45, OK	16:43:35
58	Paul Dowty, 64, CO	17:17:34
59	Julie Burges, 42, CA	18:04:30
60	Ronald Scheck, 51, KS	21:00:54

50K

1	Kyle Swift, 21, KS	4:10:42
2	Eric Davis, 33, MO	4:21:24
3	Nicholas Younts, 34, MO	4:22:50
4	Chelsey Gloude, 30, MN	4:23:49
5	Todd Hlasney, 46, KS	4:29:45
6	Jim Klever, 46, NE	4:33:45
7	Derek Pflugrad, 33, MO	4:48:28
8	Jennifer Williams, 39, MO	4:54:12
9	Jimmy Brown, 49, NE	4:55:34
10	Ruth Taylor, 33, MO	4:57:54
11	Digamber Rane, 38, KS	5:02:43
12	Dave Sutej, 50, NE	5:06:05
13	Tanner Thurman, 25, KS	5:07:39
14	Carrie Taylor, 37, AR	5:08:02
15	Mitch Brouwer, 50, MI	5:14:15
16	Chad Crowe, 26, NE	5:14:22
17	Garrett Benney, 34, KS	5:15:08
18	Scott Hagerty, 50, KS	5:17:14
19	Tom Lewis, 50, NE	5:19:17
20	Cindy Stonesmith, 55, CO	5:19:34
21	Julie Seydel, 51, CO	5:19:59
22	Michael Still, 35, MO	5:21:00
23	Allison Oberg, 27, NE	5:21:53
24	Jongmin Kim, 30, NE	5:29:33
25	Bonnie Rutel, 42, OK	5:37:46
26	Teresa Adkins, 48, OK	5:37:46
27	Kelsey Bergen, 34, NE	5:41:04
28	Ryan Swift, 23, KS	5:43:07
29	Melanie Suess, 43, IL	5:43:47
30	David Reddel, 53, NE	5:57:12
31	Drake White, 57, IL	6:03:03
32	Katy Murray, 35, KY	6:07:47
33	Alisha Beyke, 23, NE	6:10:21
34	Tyler Burt, 34, KS	6:13:51
35	Shala Burt, 34, KS	6:13:52
36	Jennie Terflinger, 37, KS	6:19:01
37	Megan Manion, 41, MO	6:19:02
38	Krystal Dinkel, 43, KS	6:23:26
39	Jason Dinkel, 44, KS	6:23:26
40	Jeffrey McDonald, 34, MO	6:24:02
41	Jeannine Lee, 47, OK	6:27:45
42	Ashton Buchanan, 33, OK	6:28:12
43	Richard Horton II, 47, TX	6:29:27
44	Glenda Farris, 42, OK	6:30:46
45	Greg Baker, 44, MO	6:31:51
46	Matthew Wilkinson, 32, KS	6:32:37
47	Regan Stoops, 38, KS	6:32:38
48	Tim Mullican, 59, SD	6:44:30
49	Aaron Korth, 40, NE	6:47:13



50	Theress Bowser, 55, KS	6:48:19
51	Larry McCracken, 48, IL	6:49:34
52	Sid Newby, 60, KS	6:51:42
53	Kim Hood, 52, IL	6:58:01
54	John Manker, 37, KS	7:00:20
55	Mariel David-Devito, 44, CA	7:00:54
56	Indika McCampbell, 42, KS	7:21:03
57	Bob Woods, 68, KS	7:21:04
58	Mark White, 53, MN	7:26:02
59	Michael Baldassare, 52, NJ	7:39:57
60	Todd Segreaves, 38, KS	7:41:58
61	Maureen Heuer, 61, IA	7:47:40
62	Mark Heuer, 66, IA	7:47:41
63	Grant Heuer, 36, CA	7:47:41
64	Patrick Weepie, 58, IA	8:14:30
65	Sally Finder-Weepie, 55, IA	8:14:32
66	Sarah Sanders, 64, KS	8:19:05
67	Ellen Wellen, 53, IL	8:43:57

Race Director Carolyn Robinson
presents Sean's buckle.

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68	Nikki Crader, 44, IL	8:44:23
69	Angela Zimmerman, 42, KS	9:19:47
70	Jerre Wassenberg, 46, KS	9:43:37
71	Camelle Wassenberg, 22, KS	9:43:38
72	Rebecca Majors, 38, MO	10:00:56
73	Elizabeth Ryan, 48, KS	10:39:26
74	Sherrie Bridenstine, 50, KS	11:00:02

*See page 52 for key

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