

Dan Rossi Memorial Ultras, 100 Mile and 50 Mile

Atwood Lake, OH

Nov. 2nd and 3rd, 2002

When an event is supposed happen problems just work out as they need to, although sometimes it feels like putting on a race is an act of faith. The sponsorship of the Atwood Resort and Conference Center made this year's event possible and I am indebted to them for their generosity. The Resort provided a start/finish area and donated the use of a beautiful cabin as an aid station, as well as reducing room rates for the participants. Hammer Nutrition also joined the sponsor list this year and the runners greatly appreciated both the Hammer Gel and the E-Caps. Local artists made unique and beautiful awards a possibility, maintaining a race tradition. Volunteers traveled from far and wide to give of themselves to this event, and it is to them that I am most grateful.

Roy Heger was a delight to witness running a new men's record time of 20:20.31 in winning the 100 mile race. Roy's humor and enjoyment of running were as noticeable as his fluid stride. However, he will also be remembered for running the whole race in shorts, during a cold night that saw the hills thicken with frost.

Cheryl McKettrick and Kimberly Theiss were clearly determined to banish DNF demons, and took to the race with clearly defined plans in place. Staying together, they ran strongly through the day and night, aided by a crew that would make a NASCAR pit crew envious. When they crossed the finish line together they were clearly relieved as well as happy to have gained the accomplishment of covering 100 miles on foot.

The persistence and tenacity of Gary Glaser were noticed by all the runners and volunteers. Not gifted with running speed but blessed with a patient drive towards his goal, Gary continued his relentless forward motion for over 32 hours to finish 100 miles. His relief at finally getting the chance to get off of his feet matched his exuberance at having finished.

The 50 mile race was hotly contested throughout most of the day, yet the two runners competing for the victory ended up becoming friends as well. Bill Bogar pulled away with a very strong and consistent run to win the race, while Larry Rutledge bettered his previous PR on his way to second place.

Runners who braved running a road course for 50 and 100 miles remarked about the beauty of the area and enjoyed the scenery, although maybe not the rolling hills. Yet what was most evident was the camaraderie amongst all the people involved in this event, and that truly celebrates the spirit and memory of Dan Rossi. The volunteers were an exceptional group and I feel spoiled and uplifted by their generosity and energy. Though only in its second year, the Dan Rossi Memorial Ultras already have a rich history. Runners returning from last year's event were greeted as long lost friends by the

volunteers, and vice versa. It is my hope that this race becomes an ever-increasing reunion of old friends who return every year to celebrate the spirit of our sport.

Ruta Mazelis, RD

100 Mile Results:

1. Roy Heger, OH 20:20.31!
2. Cheryl McKettrick, OH 22:01.18
Kimberly Theiss, OH
3. Dan Bratches, ME 24:50.01
4. Peter Bennett, TX 25:18.27
5. Yen Nguyen, TX 25:22.28
6. Frederick Davis, III, OH 25:54.44
7. Louise Mason, IL 27:23.30
8. Gary Glaser, MD 32:11.35

14 starters

50 Mile Results:

1. Bill Bogar, OH 8:41.37!
2. Larry Rutledge, OH 9:02.05
3. Joe Cleary, ONT 11:47.20
4. Jerry Bartram, OH 12:35.19

5 starters