

Hello and welcome Everyone!

The 2004 version of the Dan Rossi Memorial Ultra is upon us and I write this with great excitement. If the pre-race weather predictions (53/39, partly cloudy) are accurate then we have some great runs to anticipate. Volunteers are busy cooking their special recipes. Potatoes are boiling as I write...

Several reminders:

The 100 mile course is 11 full laps, while the 50 mile is 5 1/2. Fifty mile runners will run the first lap as their partial lap, and do not go to the cabin aid station. You go out to the turnaround, cross the road and return, bypassing the turn to the cabin aid station (unless you want some extra mileage), crossing the road when you are across from the start/finish parking lot. Come to that aid station and you will have finished your partial loop and have 5 full loops to go.

Please keep your safety as a priority. Sheriff Lucas has promised support on the road, especially at night, but this is Sat. night and the roadway twists, traffic travels fast, and drivers are not used to seeing runners out, particularly at night.

Runners can only receive aid at aid stations, unless otherwise attended to by race personnel. If you have family or friends here they are welcome to meet you at the aid stations. It would be very helpful if support folks walked to the cabin aid station to prevent a traffic/parking mess, especially as volunteers will need to be going back and forth.

Please use the restrooms at the aid stations. If you cannot wait and need a pit stop, please be extremely discreet and notice that there are well access roads that you pass that can give you some cover. You really don't want to be obvious as it would be greatly disrespectful of the people who live here, and if the sheriff is driving by....

If you decide to drop you must let race staff know so that I do not go off into one of my panics and irritate all the volunteers. If you are struggling please remember that there are experienced ultrarunners who are working here who can help you, and many of the volunteers have crewed for me before and can help get you through a rough spot. I have no intention of pulling a runner unless it is blatantly obvious that they are unable to continue. That said, please bear in mind that we have no medical personnel available at the race, and that you are in a rural area where help takes time to arrive and the hospital is quite a distance away.

Littering really upsets me and the volunteers, as well as the community. Anyone caught littering will be DQed and forced to repent by scraping up roadkill, and I will put your name in the write-up that I send to UltraRunning (guess I've made my point?).

Most importantly, if you have complaints please tell them to me. If you have compliments then please give them to the volunteers. They also respond very well to hugs. Most of these folks are my very dear friends. They are all traveling at their own expense, many with their home-cooked specialties, to offer you their time and energy. These are magical people. Leo Lightner has been aid station captain every year, and I think you will all know who he is very quickly. The names of others who are here for you are Peg, Alice, Charlie(s), Sherry, Harold, Anda, Don, Adam, and others who will be coming by. I hope that you get to know them during the course of the weekend. Also, Barb Anthony is bringing her keyboard to play for you during the dinner so that we can have a fun and relaxing meal together. Wayne and Sally Chumat will also be at the dinner and I hope that you have a chance to speak with them as well – Wayne is the artist whose prints you will be running for...

In my usual pre-race stress craze, I've been running around buying up most everything in the county. I've also had some time to think about this event and what it means to me. I realized that not all of you know about the origins of the Dan Rossi Memorial Ultras. I've written about why I named it after Dan, but not why the event began. I thought it might be nice to take a minute before it all starts to let you know why we are meeting here this weekend.

The DRM 50/100 milers began in 2001, not long after the unforgettable events of 9/11. In the midst of the shock and anguish we were all experiencing, I struggled to find something to do that would feel useful and be positive, to do something to combat the incredible helplessness I was feeling. In a conversation with my dear friend, Monica Scholz, I found my solution. 2001 was the year that Monica was attempting to set the world record for most 100s run in one year. The stoppage of flights around the country impacted her goal and she was unable to fly to at least one of her planned events. So the idea of holding a race popped up. It was something I could do. Naming it after Dan Rossi, the man who teased me into this sport I love so dearly, was a treat. With all his love of running, Dan was not able to finish a 100 before he died. Monica set the record in the race that is named after him, establishing a PR along the way. I have never seen her so focused, and those of you who have seen her run know what that statement means. Anyway, I think that the DRM 50/100 made the world a bit better place, at least for a little while. I hope that we can all feel some of that spirit here with us this weekend....

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