

HardRock 100 2018- 31:39:52

Thursday July 19

We arrived in Silverton around 10am on Thursday July 19 to check-in for the race and hand in drop bags. We stayed for the athlete briefing (which was way too long- 90 minutes, and not particularly informative). Finley ran the HardBlock kids race, which was adorable!

Then we headed out to our campsite at the Molas Pass Campground and set up. After some chicken and sweet potatoes for dinner I was asleep shortly after 7pm with Cordelia and ended up having one of the better night's sleep before a race ever (especially in a tent!).

Friday July 20

I got up at 4:15, ate a ProBar for breakfast and sunscreened up. Alison and I left the campground just after 5 to head to Silverton to check in before the start.

Start to KT- 11.4 miles- predicted arrival 8:36, actual arrival 8:49- 13 min slow

At 6 the race started. I settled into a train with a bunch of people: Jason Poole, Bryon Powell, Mike Wardian, Anthony from Silverton, James Bonnett, Mike Hinterberg, among others. It was a fun group to run with, lots of laughing and conversation. The climb up Putnam Basin was pleasant. Once we got above treeline, the group split apart a bit. It was fun to see Meghan Finney up on the Ridge giving out chocolate kisses! The wildflowers on this stretch were amazing and I had the so-named Tom Petty song stuck in my head for a bit... not terrible I guess. Anthony from Silverton and James Bonnett and I went ahead of the rest and descended into KT close together in 10-13th place. I had to adjust my shoelaces, refill my bottles, ate half a PB&J and some banana bread (amazing!), and left the aid with James.

KT to Chapman (18.4mi)- 7 miles- predicted arrival 10:18, actual arrival 10:31- split as predicted I mostly followed James up this stretch, this may have been my favorite stretch of the day. The climb up the Ice Lake Basin and Grant Swamp pass was gorgeous. There were lots of hikers out, and lots of spectators cheering. We caught up to Ted Mahon while Ted was having a bit of a low point. I was ecstatic to run with him for a bit. At the top of the pass I went by James so I could have a clear descent. I bombed the loose descent down the first half mile or so of the pass, then settled into a normal downhill cruising pace for the long descent to Chapman. I was feeling good and came into the aid station in 9th place. It was getting hot so I decided to get ice in my sleeves and buff. I also switched to my sahara style sun hat. I got passed by 4 people in the aid station. I left with Zack from Golden and we started up Oscar's Pass together.

Chapman to Telluride (27.8mi)- 9.7 miles- predicted arrival 12:43, actual arrival 13:08, lost 12 minutes on this stretch

It was hot and I just tried to keep a steady hiking pace up Oscar's pass. I was glad I had ice on me. There were tons of flies on this stretch of climb, it was hard not to inhale them. I left the aid station with Zack from Golden, but hiked at a slightly faster clip than him, I caught and passed a runner near the very top of the pass. As I reached the top of the pass clouds rolled in and it started hailing hard. I got cold from being wet (and still had some ice in my sleeves and buff). I

dumped out the remaining ice and stopped to put on my rain jacket. I ran through the hail for about 5 minutes, it was actually kind of awesome... then the hail stopped and it got hot again so I stopped and packed up the rain coat and continued the long descent to Telluride via Wasatch Saddle and the Telluride Bear Creek Trail. This was a really fun descent. As we got closer to Telluride, there were lots of hikers out. They were all super friendly, lots asked questions, "is there a race today?" "how long is it?" "when/where did you start?" I had a bit of a hot spot forming on my left big toe and my right heel and decided I would stop and address them at this station- the first where I'd see Alison. I saw friends on the way into the aid station. Koop heckled me. I sat down and asked for some food and started the foot doctoring. I tried an avocado rice ball but it didn't taste good. I ate some potato soup. Refilled my pack and bottles. Put a Rite Aid brand gel toe sleeve on my big toe and a few pieces of K Tape on my right heel, then new socks and shoes back on. It was a pretty long aid station stop, but productive. Koop heckled me more just as I was leaving!

Telluride to Krogers (32.7)- 4.9 miles- predicted arrival 14:33, actual arrival 15:20- lost 22 minutes

After a fun jog across town I started the climb up Tomboy Rd. I was hiking well and gaining ground on Zack from Golden (who passed me in the Telluride Aid Station). As we reached Mendota Ridge, Mike from Denver flew up the hill past us. Zack and I reached Krogers together. Anna Frost got me a pierogie, Joe Grant got me some Coke. I was a little startstruck. Then they told Zack and I to go down the rope together. The last part of this climb was tough but BEAUTIFUL!

Kroger's to Governor (mile 35.9)- 3.2 miles- predicted arrival 15:07, actual 16:23. Lost 29 minutes

The first part of the descent from Kroger's is STEEP. This was the first year EVER that it wasn't snow covered. Instead we had a loose scree field and a fixed rope. It was kind of fun. Once the rope ended we had a steep loose descent for a few hundred feet. I flew down and promptly blazed past a key course marker. I followed some cairns too far to the left, ran back and forth a bit, checked the Gaia app, and descended a couliour that seemed to correspond to the course. It was steep and loose, but I deemed it OK... I wasn't thinking really well apparently. It was a really sketchy downclimb in loose scree. I had to stash my poles and use my hands. I got a few hundred yards down and saw the actual trail to my right, but couldn't traverse due to a cliff, nor could I climb back up... so I continued down to the Virginus Mine and rejoined the trail at the jeep road down to Governor. I estimate I lost 25-30 minutes on this navigational error as I reached Governor with Mike Wardian, Jason Poole, and others that I was 20+ minutes ahead of at Krogers. I had some broth and tried to regroup.

Governor to Ouray (43.9)- 8 miles, predicted arrival 16:15, actual arrival 17:45- lost 17 minutes
From Governor to Ouray is a LONG descent down Camp Bird Road. It is super runnable. There were lots of 4x4s out, and they were all super respectful- slowed down, waved and cheered! I was lacking in mojo on this stretch and ended up running at a very pedestrian pace, when I had

hoped to cruise down a little more. The last bit into Ouray through the Box Canyon Park was super cool. I was glad to see Alison again in Ouray, and to pick up my first pacer, Alex.

Ouray to Engineer (51.8) 8 miles- predicted arrival 18:46, actual 20:56. - Lost 30 min
I elected to put on a long sleeve shirt for the next stretch, knowing that it would become dark along the way and the temperature would drop as we went higher... this was a bad choice as it was HOT for the first part of the climb. I picked up my headlamp here, but hoped to make it as far as possible before I had to turn it on. I knew this was a long stretch between aid and carried 1.5L of water, but ended up needing to fill my filter bottle a few times along the way because of the heat. Right out of the aid station we passed Mike WARDian and started running with Shane from Utah. The climb out of town was OK, we missed a left from the trail up to the road crossing and ran a few 100yards extra, only lost a few minutes though. As we crossed over highway 550 it got HOT. I started to feel lousy and Shane started to pull away. We caught up to Jason Poole and his pacer and passed them while they were filtering water. The Bear Creek Trail was amazing, particularly with the wash outs from the rain in the weeks leading up to the race. I was glad to be here in daylight! My stomach was feeling really bloated and lousy. I was super gassy. I stopped to poop a few times, but no poop came out, just explosive gas. It felt like anything I ate/drank was just sitting at the top of my stomach... eventually I puked. 3 times total, with just a few seconds (and a few steps) in between. I felt better after, but still super gassy. At this time I elected to stop drinking GenUCan as it has made me gassy in the past, though never this bad. We kept on hiking, got passed by a few folks on this stretch but made it to engineer shortly after having to turn on my headlamp!

Engineer to Grouse (58.3)- 6.5 miles, predicted arrival 20:23, actual arrival 22:58- lost 25 minutes

Shane from Utah was in the aid station at Engineer shivering in a blanket when we arrived. The aid station is below the top of the pass FWIW. Some warm broth and layered up a bit for the upcoming stretch. Left the aid station and immediately started shivering hard. Stopped and put on all the clothes I had (gloves, buff, winter hat, and jacket over long sleeve). After a few minutes I was toasty warm and had to stop and shed some layers. Climbing by headlamp was gorgeous. It was sort of cloudy, but the clouds were dispersed so the moon shone through most of the time, it was a ¼ moon but very bright. I love how alpine plants reflect the moon light and the light of headlamps. The climb out of the aid station is legit. There was a red light on the top of the pass that was the target of the climbing. The long road down to Grouse should have been fast, but my stomach was so bloated and painful I was struggling. Then I realized that I farted more when running and that farting seemed to relieve the pain, so I just sucked it up and ran down, still wasn't as fast as it could have been, but felt much better upon arrival at Grouse.

Grouse to Burrows (67.7)- 9.3mi- predicted arrival 23:43, actual 2:30 Saturday- lost 12 minutes
I took some time at the aid station here, ate some quesadilla and soup, refilled bottles- no more GenUCan, Tailwind from the aid station instead. Some coke. Changed clothes for the climb over Handies, ¾ tights, long sleeves. Traded Alex for Hillary. I was feeling much better and we climbed pretty well. Passed a few people who had passed me before Engineer (Darla Askew and some others). We passed one guy who was sitting on the side of the trail on a rock without

pacer or very warm clothes. I tried to encourage him to keep moving. Hillary told me about running Soft Rock earlier in the week and talked to me about the course to come. I ate more quesadilla along the way. The summit of Handies was so clear and calm. There was a photographer there waiting for the sunrise. The descent down Grizzly Gulch was really fun, similar in terrain to the runs in the Indian Peaks that I love to do. At this point, I got the ZZ top song "Legs" stuck in my head. I have legs and I know how to use them! We passed a few more people on the descent (including Mike Wardian). It felt really good! We stopped to filter some water at a stream part way down, and to eat some more quesadilla.

Burrows to Sherman (71.7)- 4.2 miles- predicted arrival 0:33, actual arrival 3:18, gained 3 minutes back on the last stretch

Into and out of aid quickly. Bryon Powell was in aid while we were there and left shortly before us. Wardian was in the bathroom. Drank some coke and rolled out of there. This stretch is a rolling dirt road and it felt good to open up the legs and run a little. Caught up to Bryon Powell and ran with him for a bit. Then left him and kept running. I pushed this stretch a little harder, but I don't think that harmed me in the end. Passed James Bonnett on the way into the Sherman aid station.

Sherman to Pole Creek (80.8)- 8.9 miles- predicted arrival 3:41, actual arrival 7:03- lost 23min
The Sherman Aid station was hopping, there were 5 runners in aid at once! Changed shirt, refilled bottles (Some of the aid stations were serving really weak Tailwind, not nearly as many calories as I'd have liked), changed socks and shoes. Swapped Hillary for Knott. Felt strong leaving the aid station, hiking through the trees to a high alpine willow meadow. My watch died somewhere between Sherman and Pole Creek, at 75 miles. I typically struggle a bit in the 3-6am time period and did a little here too. Pretty low energy, not really sleepy, just tired. Kept moving forward, Knott was great. We saw sunrise from a high meadow, wasn't a super majestic view... and it was behind me, so I didn't turn around to look often. Koop warned us about a left turn off of the maintained trail shortly after the lake... as luck would have it we ran past it but stopped after not seeing a course marker for a while, and we saw a runner we had passed disappear suddenly... we stopped and searched for a bit. I pulled out Gaia and we backtracked a few hundred yards to find the turn. Probably lost 10-15 min- got passed by 3 people, but didn't know it at the time! From the turn to Pole Creek was a tough stretch. It felt like forever running gradually downhill, following Pole Creek. I was pretty quiet and a little grumpy, I feel bad for Knott- he got me on a low stretch! I should have eaten more on this stretch.

Pole Creek to Maggie (85.1)- 4.3 miles- predicted arrival 5:08, actual arrival 8:40- lost 8 minutes
At pole creek I was craving a breakfast burrito. They didn't have scrambled eggs, but put hardboiled eggs and cheese on a tortilla for me, it wasn't as good, but was good enough! I was hoping there'd be a bathroom here... but a nicely dug latrine hole was close enough. It was now solidly morning time, the sun was up and it was getting warm. I was still in my tights and long sleeves. Not ideal. Luckily there were lots of stream crossings where I'd have Knot drench my buff and hat to try to keep cool. The elk were bugling in the meadows, it was cool! The views were spectacular (a theme of this course). This stretch was pretty uneventful. Tough terrain- stream crossings, narrow singletrack through grass, but climbs were gradual- would have been

faster if I wasn't so hot! I felt good on the long descent to Maggie. Waffles tasted really good to me on this stretch, I think I ate 4 (that's all I had).

Maggie to Cunningham (91.2)- 6.1miles- predicted arrival 7:16, actual 10:46- lost 2 minutes I came into the aid station just as Bryon Powell was leaving. As I was leaving, I heard Nikki Kimball entering the aid station and thought I'd for sure see her blazing by me soon. Knott wisely grabbed some waffles at the aid station, I think I ate 3 on this stretch. I was hot, but moving fine. I was excited to see my family at Cunningham and was starting to smell the barn. The climb out of the aid station was long and I caught Bryon Powell as he was sitting enjoying the view. The sun was on full blast and I was still overdressed and overheated. This slowed me down considerably. I expected to see the Cunningham aid station from the top of the ridge... but instead I just saw another descent and climb. This stretch was relentless. After another descent/climb I again was excited to look down and see Cunningham... only to be met with another climb. Finally I could look down on Cunningham. I knew the descent to Cunningham was tough, but I was surprised by how tough. It was very narrow, loose, rocky, with a fairly steep drop. I was a little timid on the descent. As we neared the aid station I saw Finley and gave him a big hug. He escorted me to Alison and my crew. Cordelia was excited to see me, but cried because I didn't hold her, and cried when I left the aid station. This was good motivation to get to the finish line! I was psyched to put on shorts and a t shirt! I drank some Coke, shed some weight from my pack and headed out for the final stretch.

Cunningham to Finish (100.5)- 9.3 miles- expected time 10:00, actual time 13:39- lost 9 minutes Once again I heard Nikki Kimball come into the aid station as I headed out. I traded Knott for Howdyshell. All day I had been telling myself that I would "Attack at Dawn" but dawn came earlier than I was comfortable attacking, so I changed that to "Attack from Cunningham." I knew it was a big climb out of the aid station. I was happy to be dressed appropriately with an ice buff. My legs felt good and we climbed at a reasonable rate. I saw one runner up ahead and seemed to be gaining on him on the climb, I knew with a good descent I could pick up a spot. I didn't know exactly where I was in the field but wanted to finish strong, as I've only ever finished strong in 1 100miler- Superior 100 in 2012. I also wanted to stay ahead of Nikki. I really was not into eating at this point but kept putting some calories in. A few Almonds really helped to "reset" my mouth. Wish I had done that earlier. This climb is STEEP but I felt pretty good all things considered. We met a few spectators near the top and finally it was time for the last descent. My legs felt awesome and I think we were descending fast (although subsequent GPS analysis shows we weren't that fast!). The descent went from rocky trail to rocky jeep road. We caught a runner (Adam from New Hampshire) a few miles into the descent. I knew I needed a bit of a gap on him at the finish so I could finish with Finley and Cordelia. I stayed hyper focused on running fast downhill and had Joe monitor the rearview mirror for him after we passed. Joe said there might be 1 more guy about 10 minutes up, I knew it was a stretch but figured why not and kept the foot on the gas. It started pouring rain. This felt really refreshing. Joe informed me that there were a few rolling miles at the very end that are groomed for XC skiing in the winter. We hit an intersection with no visible course markers, left was a slight uphill, right a slight down... I checked Gaia and it confirmed to go right and continue down. Once on the

rolling part Joe kept pushing me, we ran and bounded up all the small hills and down the other side, my breathing and Heart rate felt like they were actually being strained, I was pushing hard with 95+ miles of HardRock behind me. When we got to town reality started to sink in that I was about to finish HardRock! We turned the corner and I saw my family. Finley and Cordelia escorted me down the finish shoot and we kissed the rock after 31:38:42. Not quite under 30 hours, and not quite top 10, but a successful run that I am very happy with!

Conclusion:

I've run 6 100 milers. HardRock was by far my best effort, my best executed race. A big part of that was my attitude throughout the day. I smiled a lot. I enjoyed my surroundings. I took good care of my feet and body early on, fueled well, metered my effort, and enjoyed the entire run (even the low parts). In hindsight, I think I was pretty low on calories from Sherman on. By that point my mouth had become very sensitive and eating or drinking anything hurt. My stomach was fine, I just need to suck it up. I think I relied too much on Tailwind from Aid stations that was mixed too weak. I ate well at aid stations all day, but needed to eat more in between, especially the stretch from Sherman to Pole Creek, I think much of my low energy there was insufficient calories, I started to bounce back after I started eating again. Early on I ate a lot of ProBar chews which seemed fine. VFuel gels went down easy all day, though I should have taken in more throughout. Pb&J, baked goods, quesadilla, soup, coke were all good at aid stations. My feet were sore, but generally in pretty good shape, my fixes held up for the remainder of the race. My legs were awesome, I was able to hike and descend all day with no leg issues. I slowed considerably at the highest elevations, probably no more than most people, but I didn't expect to feel quite so lousy up high, mostly just felt like my breathing was harder than it should have been for the effort. I ended up spending 1:43 in aid stations. This is more than I'd have liked, but I feel like I was generally productive in that time, addressing issues (heat, calories, feet). I think I could have been under 30 hours without my 2 navigational errors and the loss of MoJo that followed. I will limit use of GenUCan in future races to prevent the gassiness but may add some GasX to my race day medical essentials.

My favorite stretch was KT to Chapman up Ice Lake basin and Grant Swamp Pass- especially the descent from Grant-Swamp. Skiing down the loose scree! Handies was also amazing. And Krogers. All in all an amazing race. I have never been as happy and satisfied with an ultra effort.