

## EXCERPTS FROM BROCK WEBB'S RACE REPORT

The Great Eastern Endurance Run 100-km kicked my butt. It's a tough, hilly, technical course, with only 23 of 42 starters making the 19-hour time limit. It's a beast to reckon with, but well organized, has a lot of good trail, and great volunteers working the aid stations – this was a great one to have run and survived. In some ways, I wish I had had a great day out there, but I didn't. Yet having the guts to keep going when things get nasty and really reaching deep down within to find the determination to persevere make that step across the finish line much more special.

The smell of old campfires hung thinly in the air as a fresh rush of feet echoed off the asphalt and lights bounced through the trees as we made our way to the trailhead. Since I couldn't find mine, I had no choice but to stay in a pack of runners with lights, even if it meant going out a lot faster than I wanted. The 50- and 100-km runners were together, so it was easy to get caught in a wave of runners that was willing to burn a little hotter than I should. Once it was light enough, I enjoyed hanging back and

trotting through the woods as I tried to get my race back on track.

The morning light filtered through the trees onto the trail, revealing fresh teeth marks made by many shoes and the scent of dry earth and forest bed danced quietly through the air. Pecking my way down a great hill about five miles in, I turned my ankle sideways on a pernicious little rock and stumbled to catch my balance without crashing forward. I surveyed the damage and continued on, it was a close one that scared me more than it hurt.

About 52 miles in I stopped, took off my pack, turned off my light, and just lay down on the trail, too tired to climb any further. I stared up at the stars, alone in this island of solitude. Slowly, the noises around me drowned out the sound of my breathing as my body relaxed and I purposely took a few moments to enjoy the full effect.

Hitting the pavement was a fantastic moment in the race. I could see the trail markers, or glow lights, on the road and I made my way as quickly as possible to them. I passed campsites

with their fiery embers still burning and the ash floated like giant snowflakes crashing into my face as I ran forward. I eventually saw the end, and heard some cheers, since they could see my light moving toward the finish. I crossed the line and received a fantastic welcome to the end of my journey at eighteen hours and twenty-two minutes.

Every race is special and every journey is unique. There are challenges and rewards, yet I am never sure what they will be until I find them. In the end, as much as that finish line was great to cross, my journey really wasn't complete until I was home, safe and sound with my family. When I got home I kissed my wife, hugged my son and soon found the restful sleep I needed to truly finish the race. Before falling asleep I looked up at the ceiling fan whirling overhead, but my eyes only saw the stars that were recently above as I had lain there on the trail just hours before. I felt whole, complete, and fortunate as I closed my eyes and heard my son run across the floor, playing with his toys below. ■

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48. Tami Rhoades	6:50:11
49. Marie Bartoletti, PA	6:51:58
50. Bob Engel	6:52:40
51. David Janosko	6:55:24
52. Suzanne Pokorny	6:56:13
53. John Dewalt, PA	6:58:00
54. Bruce McMurray	6:58:10
55. Adam Glenn	7:00:06
56. James Brockman	7:06:15
57. Megan Conroy, PA	7:08:07
58. Tim Knapp	7:09:01
59. Charles Bolek	7:09:58
60. Michael Kazar	7:16:23
61. Maggie Gartrell	7:19:26
62. Rebecca Gartrell, TX	7:19:27
63. Tony Thomas	7:36:28
64. Laura Bell	7:40:10
65. Douglas Bell	7:40:11
66. John Pope	7:54:22
67. Mike Quen, PA	8:14:12
68. Dannielle Ann Ripper, PA	8:14:13
69. Natalie Latal, PA	8:14:14
70. Katherine Belendiuk, PA	8:23:44
71. Alleasha Schirmer, FL	8:27:57
72. John Pavelko, FL	8:27:58
73. Cyrus Taylor	9:39:45
74. James Hickie, PA	9:58:05

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David Ploskonka, 28, MD	50.442	136. Robert Rummel, 62, PA	48.761	142. Mark Fitzgerald, 57	37.832
John Reynolds, 43, WV	50.442	137. John Nichols, 46	45.038	143. Robert Miller, 58, MI	31.526
Nelson Stritehoff, 59, MD	50.442	138. Perry Sebastian, 50, GA	44.677	144. Gary Fell, 62	30.626
		139. Jeannine Nicholson, 31	44.137	145. Janet Schneider, 38	28.824
		Andrew Lovy, 75, MO	44.137	146. Angie Kovacs, 40	27.023