

## New Year's One Day 2012

The 2012 One Day Run (6, 12, and 24 hour events) was held in San Francisco beginning the morning of New Year's eve day. After a three year lapse in my long distance running I elected to sign-up for the race with only bare bones training. The race would prove highly rewarding, and I'll share up front that I recommend it to anyone interested in seeing what they are capable of in a timed run.

The course followed a flat loop slightly over one mile in length adjacent to the Golden Gate Bridge. It was divided between dirt and asphalt with views of the Golden Gate, Alcatraz, the city itself, along with other sites. Some might suggest these postcard scenes would become tiresome, but I can honestly say that there was no time at which I failed to enjoy the bridge with the hills in the background.

The race start time was dependent upon the length of time you intended to run. Twenty-four hour runners started at 9 am, while the twelve and six hour runners arrived later in the day for the sake of finishing at midnight to celebrate the New Year. A final group from my understanding was running in memory of a fellow runner, Pete. As around 130 of us were participating there was always company on the course in addition to tourists walking about. I can't help but wonder what these tourists thought though as they observed us moving along in the many odd forms of the ultrarunner, which might be described as follows – the hunched over shuffle with grunt, the Frankenstein, or the old man walk with moans – to name a few.

My goal for the race was to finish 24 hours in whatever form, and I did not have any particular mileage goals. I ran for 25 minutes and walked for 5 minutes for much of the first 12 hours. Half-way in to the race I switched to walking as I was unable to run further. It was certainly my mistake not to recognize that I should have transitioned to walking more than 5 minute segments earlier in the day. My cousin visited at one point which was great as we were able to share a loop which helped boost my morale. I was especially fortunate as Judy, my wife, was supporting me 100%. Besides preparing food and drink, she walked many of the miles in the second half of the race with me despite the wind blowing against us as I moaned about nausea - I'm sure I couldn't have finished as happily without her. Other runners were also great to be around as we moved together for a lap or two from time to time. Even during the more independent and lonely miles of the night I appreciated the view of the bridge and sound of the water as I moved toward my goal. After 24 hours, I finished with 78.5 miles – I couldn't have been happier.

Ultrarunning perhaps most concerns learning about your limits when tired, camaraderie, and fun. I feel fortunate to have been exposed to the ultrarunning community since childhood through my father, and I'm more than happy to say that I'm now participating. Unfortunately, I feel obliged to note in my race report that there were a handful of participants at this event that failed to display good sportsmanship toward the less competitive runners. I surely hope this is not an increasing trend of a growing sport but instead a few outliers in an otherwise wonderful community.

Happy Running! - Robert