

RACE RECAP (watch out, this is a long one):

Laura Knoblach ~ 21 March 2016

First of all, I want to put out a HUGE, HUGE, HUGE thank you for everybody who has donated to the school! I am truly overwhelmed by your generosity. I will be writing thank you cards as soon as I can so I can thank you all individually for your incredible support.

If you haven't donated yet, and still want to, never fear! I will be fundraising until the end of May.



As for the race, it was by far the most brutal physical challenge I have ever come across. Yes, [Scott Reed](#) and [Corey Austin Wilson](#), it was even harder than Mount Yale.



I was pleasantly surprised that it went so well, though. Staying up all night was not nearly as hard as I thought it would be. Never have I more appreciated the miracle drug that is caffeine.

I finished the 4.8 mile swim in 3 hours and 11 minutes- a pace that was surprisingly consistent with my 2.4 mile Ironman swim time of 1 hour and 33 minutes. I was thrilled that it did not destroy me, because I'd broken my arm in January and only gotten two 2 mile swims in the months leading up to the race.

Despite learning from [Leslie Holton](#), Andrew Holton, and [Suzy Degazon](#) two nights before the race that I had NO IDEA what I was doing with my bicycle, I was thrilled that the 224 mile portion went so well. There's nothing more humbling (and terrifying) than being around people who ACTUALLY know what they're doing. Thanks, you three, (especially Suzy) for your invaluable advice. My final bike time was 15 hours, 31 minutes, and 22 seconds. Excluding the times that I stopped for bathroom breaks, food, and human interaction, I pulled off a 15.9 mph pace (Just under 14.5 mph including the breaks). My bike cleat also broke somewhere around mile 200. Thankfully, I came prepared and brought my old pair.

I transitioned into the run at about 3 am. A huge thank you to everybody in [Maria Simone](#)'s crew for their advice on how to use caffeine, and for pushing me to eat more salt. I am indebted to your support. My original plan was to run a total of 30 miles, trading off walking and running to complete the 52.4. Before Saturday, the farthest I'd ever run was 26.2 miles, and the farthest I'd ever run in training for this race (without walking) was 15. I ran the first 46 miles of the course, stopping only for food, hydration, and the bathroom. The run course was 26.2 laps of a 2 mile loop, half of which was a trail that went through the forest. The Race Director had walked the route several times during the day and thought it was beautiful. There was long Spanish moss hanging from the trees and thick forest.

Speaking of troupers, a thank you to my roommates [Melissa Nittoli](#) and [Whitney Paxton](#), who dealt with me turning lights on and bumping into things at 2 and 3 am every Saturday night as I came home from long rides and runs.

I undoubtedly am missing many, many people in this post. Know that you are held dearly in my heart and that I am extraordinarily grateful for all of your contributions to me, to this race, and to the school I'm raising money for. Without you all, none of this would have been possible.

I am blessed beyond measure to have you all in my life. And I am beyond humbled to have been welcomed into the international ultra triathlon family with such wide open arms.

Blessings, friends.