

Weymouth Woods 100K - Compacted Sand is Really Hard – 01/16/2016

Friday night before the race John Robinson posted in FB “the rain that is falling now will help compact the loose sand making for a faster, safer course”. Hum, more on that.

We had near perfect weather for this event, it was 45 at the start and reached a high approaching 60. When I finished I think it had fell back to 45, can't complain there. I started out with short sleeves, arm warmers and gloves, good choice. The first lap went great. I stumbled a few times getting used to the roots but no major issues. Ditched the arm warmers and gloves after lap one. By lap three my NB Leadvilles had lived up their name. They were as heavy as Lead and hard as a brick on this “compacted” surface. I switched to my NB 1080 road shoes and wow, what a difference in the cushioning and very little impact on grip. I was really settling in when the ground jumped up and grabbed me towards the middle of lap 5. Talk about compacted sand! I went sliding across the 80 grit surface which left a nice raspberry on my arm!

I started with my usual nutrition regime. I was using Tailwinds mixed half strength, GU, and S-Caps. I believe part of my nutrition problem later on was from not forcing enough calories earlier. I got behind.

Lap 6 – 7 was a low spot. It was around the 30 mile mark and I was expecting it. My wife, Phyllis, heated up the new potatoes and chicken broth we brought and I started adding these to my nourishment.

At the half way point Phyllis joined me for a lap. This was the warmest part of the day and as she says, I'm usually worn down enough so she can stay with me. I enjoyed the company. I don't recall how many times my friends Mark Rostan and Dennis Norris (as well as many others) had passed me by this time but they were kind enough to say hello as they smoked by me ☺

Lap 9 brought sundown. I really don't like the transition from light to dark. At this point the headlamps don't give enough light to see better but its dark enough you can't see as well. Another root reached out and grabbed me. I caught myself on my hands preventing more damage to my arm. Oh, but I had ditched my gloves on lap 2 so now the 80 grit compacted sand got my hands. Ouch. Well no blood this time.

Sometime after lunch Doug Dawkins had his grits cooked and I started eating them. They really worked well for me. Unfortunately I also cut back on my GU intake. And, I had only drunk six 20 oz. bottles of liquid by 7 hrs. or so.

Lap 10 went ok and most of lap 11. Then the wheels came off. And I fell again on my hands. I walked almost all of lap 12. I couldn't make myself run. I wasn't sure if my stomach was really upset or if I needed to eat. Someone told me Dawkins had a bottle of Tums. While I don't like trying new things on the run I really had no other choice. I let them settle a bit and then gagged down another GU. Slowly the wheels came back.

Phyllis had already planned on going with me on the last lap so all I needed to do was make one more lap without her. Funny how the mind breaks things down. I got some Skittles at the start/finish aid station and went back out for lap 13. Surprisingly my time for lap 13 was very close to that of lap 9! I made it back and Phyllis joined me for the victory lap. Of course I fell one more time (and tweaked my back) but I had grabbed my gloves so it didn't hurt as much.

I want to thank the RDs, aid station captains, all the volunteers, and the park staff. And of course David Lee is the best timing service out there. The course and facilities were excellent! This was my second year at Weymouth and while I slowed a bit this year I still had a great time.

What did I learn?

1. Compacted sand is very hard
2. 200-300 calories per hour is a must. You must keep up!

What went well?

1. Clothing choices. Short sleeve to start, light weight long sleeve when the sun went down.
2. Started drinking more way too late.
3. Everything I ate. Should have been more and more consistent.
4. Changed shoes

What went wrong?

1. Kept falling! No good fix
2. Got behind on calorie intake
3. Tailwinds may have let me down. Even at half strength the taste was more than I could handle late in the race and I wasn't eating enough of everything else.

Lee Starnes

Go MTC!