



Rosvold captures her first ultra race

Originally published March 30, 2008

By Karen Gardner Frederick News Post

Eva Rosvold has completed two 100-mile races in the last four years. She was the top local finisher for the JFK 50 Mile Run this year with the time of 8 hours, 17 minutes 54 seconds. And last weekend, she won her first ultra, the Bel Monte 50 Mile Endurance Run in Virginia.

Rosvold, a personal trainer who lives in Frederick, finished the race in 10:26. On a flat course, that would be a very respectable time. On a course as tough and steep as the Bel Monte, her performance was outstanding. The course has a net elevation gain and loss of 11,009 feet.

Runners start at 2,000 feet above sea level, and run on trails nearly straight uphill to 3,500 feet, with a few short downhill thrown in. Then it's nearly straight downhill to about 1,700 feet. After a few more ups and downs, runners take on two more serious climbs, one to 3,200 feet and a second to 3,500 feet.

The race starts and ends at the Sherando Lake Recreation Area., about 15 minutes from Waynesboro, Va. The course consists of trails in the George Washington National Forest. Runners not only encounter steep, narrow, rough trails, they cross creeks and clamber over rocks. Along the way, they get some spectacular views of valleys and lakes.

Rosvold, 34, finished a little more than a minute ahead of the second place woman, Rebecca Phalen, 35, of Ivy, Va. The third-place finisher was another 25 minutes behind. Sharon Lapkoff, of Jefferson, completed the course in 12:52:58, and won the women's 50-59 age group.

Of the 102 starters, 60 people completed the race. Rosvold was 10th overall and the first of seven women to finish. Last year, Rosvold was third overall among women in the race's 50 kilometer event, completing 31 miles in 6 hours, 7 seconds. She was 5 minutes behind Phalen in last year's 50K.

Race conditions can be challenging, including snow and rain at last year's event. Rosvold used this year's race as a tune-up to the Massanutten 100 Mile race she is planning to do later this spring. That race is known as one of the toughest 100 mile races in the East.



Last year, Rosvold completed the Bighorn 100 Mile Run in 28 hours, and she expects the Massanutten race to be about as difficult as that.

Training for ultra-marathons, especially those on trail, requires a little different approach than typical marathon training.

"It take a lot of mental energy," Rosvold said. In her mind, she is going over logistics, mentally mapping out when and where her stops are, and what she will eat and drink. "I use the aid stations as a motivator," she said. When she gets close, she'll think of that next aid stop in 45 minutes.

"Nutrition and hydration are really important," Rosvold said. "It's important to keep up the calories, hydration and electrolytes."

To prepare for ultras, Rosvold will train up to six hours on local trails. To help battle the fatigue that can build up in ultras, she will finish her long runs running 45 minutes at marathon pace. She will also do hour and a half tempo runs, starting with a warm-up and ending with a cool-down, at 10K pace.

"My tempo runs are longer than I would ever do for a marathon," she said. "I never used to do that before. It teaches your body to keep going, even as it's tiring." Runners must get through that feeling that their legs and feet are too heavy to lift, and the tempo training also helps with that.

She does most of her tempo runs on the road, simply because it's usually too difficult to run at tempo pace on a trail.

After a major run, Rosvold will take some time off to allow her body to recover. She swims and does yoga for cross training. "I credit yoga with keeping me as healthy as I am," she said.

When she's training for a big event, Rosvold must schedule her runs around her personal training sessions with clients. "I tell my clients who say they're too busy to work out to schedule it," she said. "I have to schedule it in."

Sometimes she has to split a long training run into two runs in order to get in the mileage. She also does some training runs with the Virginia Happy Trails Running Club, a D.C. area trail-running group.

The goal of any ultra is to finish, Rosvold said. She has started three 100-mile races and completed two. It's important to have good support. It takes planning to have supporters show up at aid stations at around the right time, with the right food and gear.

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