

Bucks County Marathon-My First Marathon

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Thank you again for all of your advice. My race was yesterday, so I thought I'd let you know how it went. Of course I will go into way too much detail, as only a runner can, so feel free to skim; it won't hurt my feelings.

My training went okay. I did all of my long runs, per the plan. At first I just couldn't go slow, and my runs always ended painfully with much walking. By my last long run, I had taught myself how to run slow and could run the entire thing, although it was still painful. During my taper, my running suddenly began to get really bad. I felt like I was slogging through even the shorter runs. I attribute it to the stress of being without power (and a generator) for two weeks, lack of sleep and a good diet during those two weeks, a lingering chest cold, and a messed up ball of my right foot. My half-marathon times had been 1:57-1:58, and I had hoped to get a 4:30 for the marathon, but quickly realized that I just needed to let that goal go and just aim to finish.

The day of the race was probably perfect running weather. I went out slowly and finished the first half in around 2:19, a 10:36 pace. Then I got even slower, not because I was trying to keep slow, but because I was in pain. My pace climbed up to the high 10s/low 11s for a while. Then, in the last three miles, something in my mind snapped and I decided I just wanted to get the thing over with. I got a little faster in mile 24 (pace in low 10s/high 9s), even faster in mile 25 (pace in the mid-9s) and went all out the last mile (pace in the mid-8s). I managed to pass around 20 people in those last three miles. I finished in 1:41:46.

So, all in all, a good experience. I loved sprinting past people at the end; a few of them even cheered me on as I passed them. But part of me wonders if I could have gone at a faster pace earlier in the race, since I had all of that energy at the end, or if it would have caused me to bonk out (which I was absolutely petrified of). I know it was mentioned above that marathons are addictive, and that I'd want to do more, but I honestly have no urge to do another one. It wasn't the race itself, it was all of the training and dedication leading up to it. I tried to time my runs when it wouldn't impact my family, but unfortunately it didn't always work out that way. I missed soccer games, boy scout stuff, etc. and if I had a bad run, I was pretty useless the rest of the day. I think I'll probably just continue doing halves with the goal of improving my time. I'm glad I did it, though...and I'm even more glad it's over now!