

ULTRA-TRAIL

AUSTRALIA

UTA50 - Lisa Nolan

Running for Robbie

On Saturday the 14th of May I became an Ultra Marathoner!!!

I ran, walked, shuffled, crawled (yes I did) 50 freaking kms!!!

I have trained my butt off for this since November and was doing great and feeling on target until four weeks ago when within a space of a week my ITB started playing up, i pulled a calf muscle and my back completely went but I refused to worry certain no matter what I was going to get to that start line. Physio and Massages made a huge difference and I lined up feeling great. I had to complete this race as I was Running For Robbie, my Dad to raise money for the Cure Motor Neurone Foundation.

I started off yesterday feeling so good running when I could, walking the hills and then I joined the conga line from the giant stairway at the three sisters through to the leura cascades, gordon falls, wentworth falls, it was the slow stop start there on the relentless never ending thousands of stairs that caused me to get cramps in my calves that dropped me like a rock, amazing support from friends, popping those magical salt tabs and soldiering on i reached the Queen Vic Hospital at the 28k mark.

I was determined no matter how bad I felt I was going to laugh, yell, yahoo, joke and smile my way through the whole race. Being the class clown i am i even managed to laugh my way through cramps. That was my number one and pretty much only race plan SMILE and enjoy myself. I had a small meltdown on the early stage on Kedumba, relentless downhill will do that to you, but by that stage theres no going back but a good chat with my friend Mel and a shared mandarin soon sorted me out. Music in my ears for Sublime point made the climb tolerable though I'm sure they threw in a couple of extra hills since last time i trained there. Meeting and chatting to some awesome fellow runners helped big time.

Highlight of my day was to see the 100km front runners scream past like they had just started their run i almost lost my voice cheering them on, seeing the first two females. Wow so inspiring. They even had time to give words of encouragement. The sewage works to furber took a long time it was starting to get dark and wading through mud, climbing over trees and pulling myself up steps with cramped calves made for the staggering part. Getting out my headlamp only to drop it into a ditch that I had to climb down to get resulted in a few bum up head down positions I'm glad no one else bore witness too.

I reached the bottom of Furber and by then it was pitch dark most of my running friends had been done and dusted for hours and i could hear the cheers above. So onwards and upwards with two cramping calves, I climbed those 951 stairs, up two, stop stretch, another two, stop stretch until one speedy 100km runner climbed the stairs doing bear crawls seriously impressed I tried that for a while and then I used Brendan Davies and Stephane Moulins suggestions of pulling myself up with hands on the wire railing this went well until I met a man severely vomiting so i stayed with him for about 5 minutes until he started feeling better, then a bit further up I found a man staggering around he had no torch and was delirious, he didn't know where he was, I watched him almost go off the edge twice so I grabbed him and tried to get him to climb with me so he could see in my torch light, but he was too far gone, I found a bench sat him down gave him a gel and a drink and stayed with him about 15 minutes until I had him promise not to move until I got help for him onwards and upwards i went, found someone to check on him and next thing I have two more people in the pitch dark with no head lamps! They had figured they would be finished well before dark so their torches were deeply packed, so they stayed with me until near the top. And finally I reached that glorious board walk!!

I Bloody DID IT!!!!!!! I climbed those last five stairs hit the chute and sprinted for the finish line. What a feeling!! I had my hubby, my son Rhys and Jacinta at the finish And many of my amazing incredible beautiful friends. I woke up the next morning feeling tired a bit shattered and I had a wee cry beating myself for not doing as well as I had secretly hoped. But dammit i did 50kms! I laughed, cheered, yahoed, thanked the amazing vollies and supporters and achieved something i never thought this 47 year old could do. I had stuck to my plan of smiling and being happy 90% of the race. That terrain was brutal 2515m of elevation gain, that was one kick arse course.

I'm going to have to do it again.

I'm thinking it may have to be the 100 next time.