

ULTRA-TRAIL

AUSTRALIA

UTA50 - Melaine Crick

The race was loud. Contagious atmosphere. Screens full of colourful people and visions for them and the day about to unfold. Feelings that still remain so vividly even now a week later just like few last healing blisters, one sore toenail and some mad pack chaff from a rogue bra clip.

UTA50 was unicorn race. A rare and beautiful sight and only ever tamed by the brave and strong. I harnessed so much about myself that day. However during the night I let the reins go and I lost some control of my menses.

At 95 ish km's I was in the right spot at somebody else's wrong time and I was off their schedule and they let me know. I had not finished my race yet and I was being told to hurry up. I laughed it off, but when had I fallen off my unicorn race? I didn't understand... I was doing fine and I felt great. I was right under the milky way and almost done.

As I began a descent into the darkness of Leura Forest, I slowly felt broken as pieces of my runners code and shield fell away. I had cracks in my armour from 95 km and it had been handed to me like an invisible punch to the sternum. I had not intended to fail anyone let alone myself out there and there I was slipping and falling short of someone else's expectations. What was happening? I started to check out of my race plan. I was really upset.

I had planned everything properly but not perfectly so that I could just be free to be me and enjoy the privilege of running the UTA50. I simply wanted to run for me. A big long race in a moment of my time on earth I would never ever forget. I held it together but I was all over the place, exposed and mad. Mad at my headlamp, mad at the universe for the runners crossing under the stars and it being so negative. Mad at the darkness surrounding my heart. I was better than this.

As I crossed the finish line I adjusted my mood and my sails, and hobbled to my truck where I felt safe finally. I drove with cruise control on. I was in shock and I was trembling with the heater on full blast and I knew the drill. My body had started to shut down, but my mind was fine. I was just upset and had to let it go. It was blocking me from enjoying my post race moment.

I had run light all day and into the evening, but then that last 5km to the finish I ran heavy and had to stop halfway up the Furber Stairs and gazed at the stars. I was alone no matter what the whole time on this journey and even though runners passed me while I regained composure and direction, I was happy again knowing I had done it. It was almost over. When you see the milky way and the three sisters and all the headlights in the night, you regain some hope back that soon again your going to be back here, and you will eventually find yourself all over again and again. That's the mountains, always healing damaged spirits and lost souls.

When I arrived at the QVH my best friend opened my car door and hugged me as I fell out. I was going to be ok. She had me. She got me warm and she took control of the situation. She was there for me and just then I needed to let it all go. My race was over, heal baby heal.