



Elkton Maryland Big Elk Marathon Trip Notes June 21-24, 2013

Like last weekend's marathon (in Paradise Upper Peninsula Michigan), this one had *everything* to do with the Kings Mountain SC 14-person marathon and reunion. It was run by Jefferson Nicholas who stepped up to the plate when a South Carolina marathon was needed (following the snowed out Myrtle Beach marathon) for two 50-state finishers. Last weekend's Paradise Marathon was directed by one of those 50-state finishers.

If Jefferson were the race director for more half-marathons or marathons, I'd go, as would most of us. We were delighted to see about 200 half-marathoners and 50-marathoners. Fortunately I chose the half for this trail marathon as the single track hilly course took me 4:30. (It took 4:15 marathoner Diane 7:15.)

From the website: *The lore of Foxcatcher Farms continues... Throughout the decades, the hills and hollows of William duPont's storied estate have tested the limits of thoroughbreds. Barbaro trained for his Triple Crown; Olympic swimmers and wrestlers grappled for glory; and generations of duPonts out-foxed their furry foes. This year, as the sun rises on the summer solstice, you can follow in the footsteps of greatness. Whether foal or filly, we invite you to trod the grounds of Fair Hill for the Big Elk Marathon & Half-Marathon. You're in for 26.2 miles of rollicking terrain, on which jockeys have ridden and stallions have stridden. Get the jump out of the gate if you must, but remember: It's a marathon, not a sprint. And at the height of summer, this race has all the trappings of a sweat-stained steeplechase -- except instead of sipping a mint julep, you'll have competitors nipping at your heels.*

Course description: *This off-road course has a little bit of everything! Starting by the fairground rec center we'll run a little bit of a road prologue to thin out the crowd before we hit the trails. The course is a mixture of single track, double track, gravel road/DNR fire roads, bridge crossing, XC field crossings, and a creek crossing or two. The first third of the trail has a healthy amount of rock gardens to keep you alert and on your toes while the rest of the course has a fair amount of roots to keep you engaged. If we happen to run after or during rainy conditions the first half of the course does a great job at managing water but the second half does not meaning you will get muddy.*

Specials:

- Easy and inexpensive registration
- No pressures as there is no finish-line closure or time limit



- Big goody bag of a hydration pack, samples, a full size jar of Biscoff spread and protein bars
- A decent shirt and medal for the price
- Lots of food on the course

Oddities:

- Volunteers reported being paid and having found the job on Craig's List
- Mosquitos and bugs; roots and rocks; stream crossings; bridges and hills

The people:



Diane with RD Jefferson and the hydration packs given to the first 300 registrants.



The horse folks fortunately had a different trail. Here is Jim coming into the finish line, not long after the female marathon winner – a light little thing that just flew over the rocks and streams like a little deer.



Families came out to encourage their runners and this is a wee little one running in with her daddy before chip removal.



Happy to be done? Not at all! I love these kinds of trails and will consider this one again and would have readily considered it again this same day if I hadn't been inconveniencing the workers.



Thank you Diane for these group pictures. Note the hydration pack as goodie bag.

Touring is in the cards of course



Far Hills Inn was an historical home turned into famous eatery where they produce much of their own food. The next night would be at Chesapeake Bay Inn for soft shelled crab followed by a walk about the old town's homes and businesses.



Havre de Grace brought us to old paddleboats and lots of water views and a poor momma with ten babies.



Within a long boardwalk came many surprises, not the least was a Decoy Museum with something for everyone.



There was a famous fudge shop on one side of the road and a well-frequented ice cream shop on the other side. We would eat bayside, but not until we'd seen many antiques and signs with indication of the town's mood.



Colorful Victorian homes were in both Havre de Grace and in Perryville across the bay. Then the next day into Newark, Delaware brought us to their main street with Hookah parlors and a huge university campus. We would eat in their oldest tavern that evening.

Oops, did I finish this trip report? I'm now many trips later and darned if I can even remember so this is the end, temporarily. I'd go to this one again!

After Elkton, Marie came in from KC the next day, and we were off the following day to Washington D.C., then immediately off to a CAD Engineering Camp, followed by a week in the Berkshires at my lovely Kripalu Yoga Retreat where I had R&R (well needed) and she had Boot Camp for Teen Goddesses in Training (also well needed.) We were home merely hours before catching an early flight to San Francisco with Tom where we had a lovely apartment for a week near to Nob Hill and Union Square. Now I'm off to Vancouver and a hiking trip to Whistler. Enough? Somebody's got to do it!

Itinerary

Fri Jun 21

Drive to Elkton MD – about 3 hours

Hotel Hampton Inn Elkton – 3 nights
2 Warner Road, Elkton MD 21921 Tele: 410 398 7777

Sat Jun 22

8:00am Big Elk Marathon (half) at Fair Hill Natural Resource Management Area Fair Grounds
4640 Telegraph Road, Elkton MD, 21921

Race day registration and packet pick up will be available from 7:00-7:45am.

Part of XTERRA Series Big Elk Marathon and Half Marathon

www.adventuregeekproductions.com/xterra-big-elk-marathon.html

Directions: In Cecil County, exit 100 off Interstate 95 North toward Rising Sun on Route 272 North. Take a right on Rt. 273 and follow to the intersection of Rt. 273 and 213, proceed through the traffic light - Fair Hill entrance to fairgrounds, race barns, Walls Hall and riding stables is 300 yards on the right.

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Mon Jun 24

Late am Depart Elkton to NJ via car

Participants:

Diane Bolton – either coming into Phila 50 minutes away or Baltimore 1 hour away

- Staying at Hampton Inn

Glen Christensen with girlfriend Denise – Glen was at Capon with Diane

Jim Mellody – doing half