

Danny Weatherly

First Ultra....so automatic PR as long as I finished right? Well then, PR BABY!!! Some of you may remember how utterly crushed I was at Richmond when I bonked so hard after having the training cycle of awesomeness. Therefore I went into this race with absolutely no expectations. In fact, I hadn't done much distance at all since Richmond, and really didn't feel prepared. About the only thing I did right since the marathon was actually taper properly. So I got up this morning at 4:30, got the kids up, and got ready to go. We drove out and got to the parking lot. Met up with Lori H. who was gracious enough to offer me a seat in her oh so warm car! The kids were both volunteering at the race, so they were already busy. A little later Les G. joined us for some great conversation and planning session. Then Michael N. joined in the fun and we were having a great time waiting for the start. Lots of DMers out this morning for the event, including The Lumberjack making the trip down. Finally time to line up and we see Tommy B. Chris N. Susan H. Steve S. Michael K. and many others that I can't remember right now. I line up with Les G. and decide that he is going to keep me going at a reasonable pace today instead of me blowing up like I always do. Let me tell you, if you ever get a chance to run with Les, do it, he is so much fun to run with. Conversations, plans for the future, military stories, you name it, we talked about it, and the miles flew by! Every time we passed an aid station, I stopped and fueled up, probably not too wisely. I think I might have eaten so much that I gained weight out there! At the 64th street aid station, was the bright shining smile of Ally S. and Maria P. (at least I think Maria was there, it sure looked like her, but she was always helping someone else when I came through. After the first loop along the water I stopped again and shedded some layers that were burning me up. Lost the hat, gloves, arm sleeves, and tights. Ally was kind enough to stash them for me, as my drop bag never made it down there (my kids had it!) Just before mile 13, on the Osthmanthus loop (however you spell it) I went down, hitting the ground pretty good, but popped up pretty quick. No major damage done. We kept going, and it was great at the first aid station to be loved on and fed by my girls. What a boost. As we headed out for the second loop, we found Marie randomly running with people. Now that is a huge boost! Somewhere on the second loop, I went down again, and this time it was not a pretty tuck and roll like the last one. I landed hard on my right side, scraping my knee pretty good. I was actually a little dizzy there for a moment, and then it passed. Kept going, and then right at mile 20, Les goes down right in front of a camera man. Hope there is some good shots of that! Doc Fast was at the 64th street aid station when we got there, and his big smile and go get em attitude provided another boost when we needed it. The second water loop had a nice surprise for us. The tide had come in and there were 2 spots of water crossing. At first I was irritated, but then I realized, that cold water on my feet, soaked though they now were, felt really good and refreshing. So two trips through the water hazard and I was feeling great! (BTW the Innov-8 and Wright Socks make a powerful team! 31 miles, wet and soaked, and not a single blister!) Back to the aid station for another shot of Mountain Dew and Pepsi and off we went. At mile 25, Les decided he was going to walk some and sent me on my way. I have to admit I had very mixed feelings on this. We had done 25 together, I wanted to do them all with him. But I have never trained as a run/walker, and once I start walking, you might as well call the game off. So I ran on ahead, and was soon at the 26.2 point. I looked at my watch, and I was just a bit off my Richmond pace, running trails and in wet shoes. I hadn't walked at all yet, and I was absolutely thrilled! This was a huge mental victory for me! Got to the last aid station and there were my kids along with the great Kate H. Oh yeah!!! A hug and a hand off to the girls

of my camera (I was tired of carrying it) and I was off for the last 4 miles. At this point I was just ready for it to be over. I was determined to do this without walking, and that is exactly what I did. Ran with various people for the rest of the race, and when I broke out onto the pavement, I was elated. I couldn't handle the concrete though, and ended up running on the shoulder, much softer there. My feet were killing me, and my knees were taking turns screaming obscenities at me. I took a page from Jens Voight and screamed "Shut Up Legs!" and carried on. The finish line of a race has never looked so good to me! Mission accomplished!!!! Brand shiny new PR and distance for me. NO WALKING (except at the aid stations!) I am beyond happy with this day. Thanks to all that made it special! Daily Milers are the best!!!!