



Simril Multisport Coaching's Lee Simril Interview with Ultra Runner Kris Whorton

LS: Congratulations on finishing the [2009 Umstead 100 mile Trail Race](#)

KW: Thanks. It's been a good week.

LS: Is it true that you set a new record for female masters runners in a 100 mile event?

KW: Yes. The previous record was 17:13, set by Connie Gardner in 2006.

LS: How was your training leading up to the big day?

KW: Training for Umstead was a bit atypical because we had a big 4 months last year with four 100 milers between July 19th and November 8th so I figured I would just carry it through the year after I signed up for Umstead in September. The first 100 was great, but we DNF'd on the second (three weeks later) with only about 18 miles to go. I still feel wonder at what happened to us on that one because we both felt good physically but we weren't into it mentally after about 55 miles for me and 75 for Randy. The next two 100s went well but I think I came out of the year feeling a little more worn out than I expected I would. I guess I was mentally tired because my head just wasn't in my training over the next few months and although I did the miles, averaging about 50 a week from November to the end of February and ran a few races, I didn't have my head in them and without the mental component, I just wasn't running like I wanted to. Umstead had been in the back of my mind for months, but I hadn't committed emotionally and I didn't want to go up there and run a half-assed race so about the third week of February I had a little talking to myself about commitment and attitude. Two weeks later we headed over to Mississippi and I ran a really solid, comfortable race, and had a PR. It gave me the mental confidence I needed and I figured I could gut out a borderline 17 hour finish at Umstead. I kept my mileage up for the second and third week of March and then only ran about 35 miles two weeks before and 4 miles the week of Umstead.

LS: Please give me a run down of your nutrition for race day, beginning with the night before the race and ending at the finish line.

KW: At about 4:30 we had an early dinner of rice pilaf, mashed potatoes, broccoli, and a beer. Race morning I had a little oatmeal about 2 hours before the start and half of a Recoverite. I'm not a big eater before or during races because I don't want to give my stomach fits. During the race, I had a Heed/ Perpetuem mix in my water bottle about every hour and I went through about two packets of Clif Blocks. I also ate a few cantaloupe cubes, a few pieces of potato with salt, and in the early evening, I drank Mountain Dew or Pepsi at the aid stations to try to settle my stomach a bit. The Heed/Perpetuem mix really works for me. Randy met me with a Recoverite at the end of the race.

LS: Please tell me your best moment of race.

KW: The whole day was really lovely and I enjoyed most of it, but I actually enjoyed mile 98 ½ to 99 ½ the most. We were running up the road to make the last turn into the finish stretch and it



felt like we were flying because we were moving so fast. I don't know what the actual time on that mile was but it felt like a 7 minute mile and it was really empowering to feel so strong and so good at that stage. I felt like I could run like that pace for a couple more miles.

LS: Please tell me your worst moment of the race.

KW: I don't think I really had any worst moments on this one. Two years ago I had a lot of stomach problems and had many pit stops so when my stomach started going south on lap 7, I was a little concerned. I had to stop three times during those 25 miles but it was okay and everything held together.

LS: Did you use any pacers or safety runners during the race?

KW: I did run with "pacers" from 50 miles onward but it was more for conversation/company than pacing. Randy ran 50 to 75 with me and Stephen Smith ran the last 25. Pacing is really a misnomer because it's unrealistic for someone who's run 50 miles to be able to keep up with someone fresh. The "pacer" is there for companionship and the runner sets the pace. My companions, Randy and Stephen, did a great job keeping me company and I was happy to run with my usual training partners. I ended up feeling like I was out there on a training run.

LS: Did you get to enjoy the post race party? Do they have post race parties at 100 mile running races?

KW: We had our own little post race party actually. I came in about 3 ½ minutes after the lead woman (Jill Perry) and didn't realize at the time that she had just finished. She was nearly 40 minutes ahead of me at the end of the 6th lap so I had no idea I was so close to her. I came in and Blake, the race director, and some of the other race personnel were talking to her but I still didn't get that she had just finished. My contacts were kind of gooped up from the pollen and I noticed a guy off to my left. He was standing there sort of expectantly and I didn't recognize that he was my friend Kean Hankins from Pinhoti. Randy came running in, bummed he'd missed the photo op at the finish line and Stephen sort of stepped off to the side. Then I realized the guy was Kean and Randy, then Stephen, and then Kean hugged me. We went inside, sat in front of the fire about 20 minutes, and just felt happy. Randy took care of me like he always does—he handed me a long sleeve shirt and a Recoverite and was generally awesome. Kean gave me a bottle of Champagne and then Randy, Stephen and I went back to the hotel and I got a shower, a beer, and some pizza. I could only handle about 2 bites but it was good. The race "party" was the next day at noon when the race was officially over but by then, we were nearly to Asheville where we had a great lunch of bison burgers, spinach salad and beer.

LS: What motivates you to compete in Ultra Running Races, as opposed to just exercising for the sake of fitness?

KW: I love running and being outside. Races give me the opportunity to explore a new or favorite place, to see old friends, and to get food and water on the way. Some people really get inspired by the competition element but I'm not very good about thinking in terms of beating someone else because I see a race as a challenge to myself and it doesn't make sense to try to have it be about how or what I can do against someone else. Sometimes I go into them with a



goal, but usually I just want to enjoy the day. Races also encourage me to stay on track with my training—if I don't put in the miles, it will be harder to get through the event.

LS: What are some of your race plans for the rest of 2009?

KW: We have a fun marathon planned in Louisville at the end of the month (Kentucky Derby), Sweetwater 50K in Georgia in May, and Tahoe 100 in July. We don't have anything on the schedule beyond that, except maybe UpChuck 50k, but Randy is planning on Pinhoti and I'll probably crew for him to return the favor for all he's done for me the last 6 months.