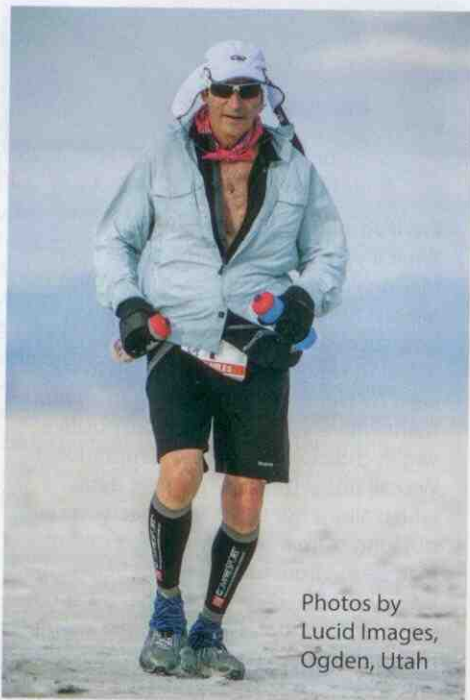


LOGAN and MOE CONQUER THE SALT FLATS 100-MILE RUN

Wendover, Utah, the 24th of April 2015, www.saltflats100.com

This is the continuing saga of Moe "The Eagle" Beaulieu and his son Logan, legendary father and son ultramarathoners. Moe, 70, has completed over 130 ultra marathons so far, and Logan is quickly approaching that number as he has run well over 70 ultras already. (They are all listed on his website LogansRun.ca). Logan also offers coaching for serious runners through his website.



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MOE:

I'm Moe "The Eagle" Beaulieu. What can I say about this race? Firstly, I figured it might be quite cold (even being born in Northern Saskatchewan, Canada), I don't do that well in the cold! I have had hypothermia three times over a few decades. It hasn't happened for about 10 years now, but I got nailed at the Salt Flats 100 in the late afternoon. More on that later and the strategy I had to employ in order to finish.

Salt Flats 100 is way tougher than I thought it would be, even though I have apparently finished hundred-mile races that were (said on paper to be) tougher, with MORE climb and MORE obstacles like river crossings, hail, snow etc.

I am used to very technical, but soft, dirt trails

here in British Columbia, with rock scrambles, lots of climb, and streams to cross. But the first sixteen or so miles of this race were on salt, where the Bonneville land speed records are set. I was not used to the salt surface. I should have done some of my weekly training on mixed courses with a pavement-like surface with hard-packed dirt and gravel.

But there were some stellar views from the hills (mountains, that they called "Islands," maybe that's what they were when the area was an inland sea?) There was scenery unlike any that I've seen in any other ultra. The Mud Flats were sticky and gooey in places adding three-inches of mud to my shoes. At night I saw bright stars and a quarter moon, which was lovely! Coyote signs were around, and I saw what I thought was a badger-like track a few times. And I saw lots of doves, at times close by. My thought was: *isn't it too arid for birds of that sort?*

There were also thundershowers in abundance, sometimes every hour, sometimes within 10-15 minutes of the last one. There were also 20-mile-per-hour headwinds. So once you're wet, that lends even more challenge— more bang for the buck!

The race was very well-organized and well-marked. There were friendly, personable volunteers. They were among the top group of volunteers that I have ever seen in 30+ years of ultras! They made you REALLY feel that you were part of the family. The Ham Radio operators and Search and Rescue were also very helpful. They also provided a nice variety of food some vegan, including hummus and rice crackers at one station. Logan and I loved this.

Back to the problems most of us had to fight through. I was fine until the 40-mile mark, but

from 41 to 50 miles I got nailed three to four times in showers and wind. I really slowed on those mud flats. I hobbled into the 50-mile mark muttering, chilled, and teeth clicking. I figured I was done. I REALLY, REALLY wanted to quit. My time to that 50-mile mark was 13:20 and I figured that was good enough to get me a time of 27:45 to 28:30 for the 100! So I kept going. As a 70-year-old throat cancer survivor (will be four years in remission in July), I figure what I lack in talent I make up for in persistence. Ha!

But I was so cold that I had to change my strategy RIGHT THEN. I have had hypothermia three times over three decades. I made it through, but once was pulled out of a race at the 87-mile mark. No one likes this, but it beats dying.

So instead of my usual one- to three-minute transitions (which amount to about 23 minutes total off the course) for the first 50 miles, the second 50 miles I was off the course for 3 hours and 21 minutes. I stopped between stations for 20 to 30 minutes, once nearly an hour. I hopped into vehicles when I could and huddled into comforters and sleeping bags until I was warm again. I hated doing this, but it was the ONLY way I figured I could finish. Then I'd run between stations— no walking for five to eight miles, and then stop to warm up again. When I ran, my core temp was sufficient to see me through. When I walked. I cooled rapidly to a shake again (no rattle, no roll, just shakin').

It was a LOOONG night indeed. I was so thankful to see Vince Romney, the race director with his family and friends at the finish line, and to get my Salt Flats Buckle! To anyone considering this race, I'd have to say

that it is super. But I would suggest that you train on flat, hard surfaces, like paved roads and packed dirt trails.

I feel great except for my feet. I had a fifty-percent loss of skin on the balls of my feet. I was prescribed antibiotics for seven days (a first for me!) and I have to stay off my feet for maybe two to three weeks. They say my feet have the equivalent of a 3rd degree burn. At 80-miles a nice doc who studied in Maryland I believe he said, was at a Boy Scout station and he fixed me up. He cleaned and cut away the extra flaps of skin, put ointment on both feet and dressed them. Then he said, "you can't run on those blisters, can you?" I said, "If I don't finish because of blisters on my feet, I will have a blister on my SOUL!" I recommend that folks considering running this race change shoes, or socks, which I never did. It may have helped.

I will start weights and maybe rowing in a few days, as I am able. The time off my feet will do me good (at least I am telling myself that). I am eating my vegan diet and upping my green drinks and smoothies for an even bigger antioxidant increase.

Visit my website:: www.eagleruns.ca

NOTE: I would like to thank my sponsor GREEN FOODS of Oxnard, CA for their continued support. I'm also excited about my NEW sponsors: NEW BALANCE and GORD'S RUNNING STORE, a Calgary, Alberta tradition! I also want to acknowledge that I train and run in Victoria, BC Canada with Trailsofthewest.com founded by Mike Suminski, the Trail Guy and Adrian Fletcher.



LOGAN:

First of all, I want to say that Salt Flats was a great race. Folks had their challenges, including me. but that is all part of the ultra distance race. I knew the race was going to be a cold one at night, but I was not thinking that it was going to be as chilly as it was, or that rain and wind would add to the difficulty. The race started on a mild morning, at 8am. At that time, it was not too cold. So the race started and I followed what appeared to be over a half dozen runners. I was not sure how many were 50-mile runners,

so I thought it best to hang back as it is very easy to get caught up with the front runners and end up in trouble hours later in the race due to a faster start. I've been through that more than a few times in my life. Sure, I live in Edmonton, Alberta where winters can be as cold as -40c and that is often without the wind-chill. But running a race in cold weather is a completely different ballgame. When running through the heat of the day, and then slowing down in the evening hours, the body can become very chilled.

I started the race with a young lad who was running the 50-mile distance who was already an experienced ultra-runner with several short distance races under his belt as well as over a half dozen 50ks and 50-mile races. We seemed to have found our rhythm and were making conversation along the way. He had a Garmin on his wrist, so I would ask him every so often what pace we were running. I do this when running near somebody that has one. As for having one on my own wrist, I personally think there is too much fussing, so I don't bother with them. After running numerous ultramarathons, a runner gets a very good sense of what pace they are keeping. Guestimating pace is usually quite accurate. Listening to your body is your best built-in GPS.

At the first fifteen miles of the race, the two of us seemed to be maintaining a good pace and hovering around 9:10 per mile on the Salt Flats, which looked like the surface of another planet. In the later hours, a 100-miler will always tell you if you were moving too quickly, without exception. I ended up pick-

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ing up the pace slightly and moving ahead of the young lad. I knew he was not far behind though. The 50-mile runners end up turning off the main course and following a trail of their own, so I did not see the youngster again. So there I was, 15 miles down and feeling good. The aid stations were fantastic and frequent, so runners never had to worry about running low on food or fluid at any point. Runners are also allowed to leave their own personal drop-bags throughout the 100-mile course. And, the views were amazing!

I made good time, up until the 100k mark (62 miles), where I started to slow considerably. At this point I was counting every step between aid stations, where I could get a hot drink inside of me and briefly sit beside the fire— although my stops did not end up being brief. After running on packed salt for the first 16 miles, it was nice to run on a trail that I enjoyed as it included some small hills, shrubs and birds. A quarter moon brought some light to the course, but not too much as there was cloud cover. The night was long. All runners cannot wait for the sunrise as it gives new life and brings warmth. I was too spent to have new life, but the warmth was nice as I was cold all night. I ended up putting on all the clothing I brought in two different drop-bags. But they were stretched out over twenty miles, so I had to wait to reach each one to put on another layer. I now know that I should have placed another couple of drop bags at the several drop-bag sections of the race. I considered putting on a garbage bag with a cutout for my arms and neck, but the twenty to twenty-five mile per hour head wind would have been blowing it all over the place, making it very difficult to provide any warmth, only frustration. So after the moonlight was daylight, and as I was approaching the finish line I started to feel better. This usually happens when a runner knows that they are going home.

No gambling in the Wendover Casinos, only at the race. I wish to thank my continued sponsor Green Foods, which I use regularly when training, racing and daily life. Green Foods, YOU COMPLETE ME.

Logan Beaulieu
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