



Sweaty She Monday (01/25/10): Squiggles on the Trail
By Susan Farago

Sweaty She postings can be found on the NEW "Sweaty She" FAN PAGE at www.facebook.com/sweatyshe or at www.susanfarago.com.

I grew up in Minnesota, land of 10,000 lakes and six months of snow and cold. While there were many winter activities to pass the time, few things seemed as funny and amusing as when the boys would test their cursive writing skills by writing their names in the snow...with urine. I'm not even going to articulate what type of "writing instrument" they used, but use your imagination and you will get the idea.

While the girls had a harder time of it - OK, we actually thought it was quite dumb and knew better than to even try - the boys thought it quite hilarious.

I had completely forgotten about this skill until I ran the Bandera 100K trail race a couple of weeks ago. I will admit my rate of public urination had significantly increased since I took up trail running, a necessity when you are in the middle of nowhere and "have to go". But I still follow some basic principles even when racing: stop, squat, try to avoid the feet, watch for splatter, hurry up before anyone sees me, etc.

So when I was seemingly in the middle of nowhere at Bandera, around the 45 mile mark, I noticed what looked like the remnants of someone's leaky water bottle on the trail as I ran. A long, single, wet squiggle appeared seemingly out of nowhere, continue for about 12 feet, and then abruptly stopped. At first I thought it unfortunate for the poor soul to have a leaky water bottle. What would they do if they got thirsty? The next aid station wasn't for another five miles? But then this single squiggle started to appear with more frequency and a shocking thought flew through my brain.

Peeing on the fly?

I've seen this in triathlon while on the bike. Heck, I've even done it (and it takes A LOT of concentration). But while running? While contemplating this possibility, I ran up behind a guy and passed him. And just as I did, we both encountered another squiggle. I said, "Don't even tell me that's what I think it is." And he said, "Yes it is." He then went on to tell me about a guy he saw "whip it out and pee on the fly" without missing a step.

Well I'll be darned. For the remainder of the race, I looked for signs of legibility whenever I came up on a squiggle. Someone's name? An inappropriate phrase? Nope. Just squiggles. Apparently these boys aren't as talented as the boys from up north. But maybe that's a good thing.

Thoughts or comments? Go to the Facebook Discussion Board on the FAN PAGE at www.facebook.com/sweatyshe to comment on this article OR to see more "Sweaty She Monday" postings, visit www.susanfarago.com.