

## **TRAIL FACTOR Run Report 1-4-2009**

### **Saltzman Firelane 1 Gasline 15.75 mile loop**

Trail Factor had its first Sunday run of 2009. Our plan was to complete a loop within forest park starting at the Saltzman Rd. access point. The loop that we would be running would wind us through some of my favorite trail up in forest park. It's a 15+ mile loop with a couple of good climbs and low number of trails to remember.

We had a low turnout this weekend. There were only 5 TRAIL FACTOR folks at the trail head. Those attending included Shawn, Jessi, Ruben, Mark and Ben. Most were veteran TRAIL FACTOR runners with the exception of Mark. It would be his first TRAIL FACTOR run, but certainly not his first trail run. He has definite running experience and triathlon experience. He has completed several marathons and half ironman events. He is also getting ready to become a married man. Congratulations Mark.

The run starts off on Saltzman road. Saltzman road is a jeep road that basically climbs to the top of Forest Park. We normally access forest park on the lower half of Saltzman road, but there is also an access point at the top of Saltzman just off of skyline rd.

We started our run nice and easy and made sure to keep our eyes forward. The recent poor weather has left roads and trails littered with debris and downed trees. The trail is also still relatively icy in some sections and no one wanted to have a trail factor style slip early on in the run.

We stayed together up Saltzman and took a left onto Maple trail about ½ mile up Saltzman. Once on maple, we were in a nice little groove. At this point the trail is single track and winds its way up to Leif Erickson.

We climbed up maple and promptly took a left onto Leif Erickson. We were blown away immediately by the number of runners that we saw. We were wondering why trail factor had such a low turnout with all of the Leif Erickson runners out and striding along. We waved and greeted everyone we saw until we hit firelane #1, which would be our next turn.

We took a quick right onto firelane #1 and started climbing. Firelane #1 is a very, very steep climb. It doesn't last more than a ½ to ¾ of a mile, but it certainly doesn't let you forget that you are climbing. It must pitch up to over 20% in some sections. We all stayed pretty close together and finished the climb just before turning onto Wildwood Trail.

We took a right onto Wildwood Trail and decided to just get used to running Wildwood. We would be on it for about 8-9 miles before heading back to the start of our run.

Wildwood was in pretty darn good condition considering all of the snow that had recently fallen. The trail was icy, muddy and debris ridden in some sections, but it was scattered and not consistent. We were able to run pretty much unhindered and fluidly.

The pace at this point was nice and steady. We were probably running between 7:15-7:45 min/miles only slowing down for hills, debris and mud pits. I actually had a mud pit almost claim my shoe as its own. I wrestled it back and was back to running smoothly.

We continued on and stopped once to use the rest room and eat some Gu. As the pace continued on, I felt that it was time for me to call it a day. I took a shorter routed back to the car and finished with 13 miles in 1:48. Ruben and Ben continued on. They were determined to finish the loop.

They continued running on Wildwood, but turned slightly early. They accidentally turned right onto Oil Line rather than Gas Line. They said it was steep a slippery. They were now on their way down to Leif Erickson.

They took a right onto Leif Erickson after descending Oil line. They would run on Leif for about  $\frac{3}{4}$  to 1 mile before hitting the other end of Maple trail.

They promptly took a left on Maple trail and followed its rolling terrain until intersecting Saltzman Rd for the final time. Down Saltzman for another  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile and they were done. Ruben and Ben had finished 15 miles in 1:58. Nice run guys.

Not long after finishing, Mark and Jessi came bouncing along Saltzman back to the car. Everyone was finished. We were cold, so we kept the post run chat brief and headed home for some food and warm clothes.

Thanks for all who attended. It was a great run and I look forward to next weekend.

If you are interested in joining TRAIL FACTOR for a Sunday run, please visit [www.trailfactor.com](http://www.trailfactor.com) for more information.