

Finish #4: Ted Kaiser, 2003, 56:57:52

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Live The Dream

Race Report by Cave Dog (Ted Kaiser)

2003

I had a great time at the Barkley. The Cumberland Mountains in Tennessee were beautiful and refreshing. The creeks were vibrant and the wildflowers were beginning to blossom. The songbirds chirped and the newts came out in the rainstorms. During the dimly lit dawn, after a long night of climbing, I would periodically scare up dozens of wild turkeys that, in only a figment, make a rasping flapping sound reminiscent of a distant fleeing vampire. When hiking through the woods, I enjoyed seeing the ancient remains of a long history in old stonewalls, coal mining pits, rock foundations of Scottish and Welsh immigrant homesteads, and prison bunkers. I had not spent much time in the South and I had found the subculture interesting and new.

As difficult as the snowstorm made the event this year, it brought a brilliance to the trees, sawbriars, and poison ivy that I had not expected. It was an incredible sight to watch the daybreak upon the sliver lined limbs and twigs. By the second night the mudpit of a North Boundary Trail had grown ice crystals an inch toward the sky. Every step was like a sliding dance step with a crunch. I had never tread upon anything like it.

It was an honor to be selected to participate in the Barkley Marathons. I have never been around so many elite athletes. The Barkley was an incredible event. I learned, I grew, and I experienced.

Live the Dream,

Cave Dog