

Truckee Marathon Race Report

By, [Adam Kimble](#)

Last weekend, on a perfect fall morning in Tahoe, I ran the Truckee Marathon with my wife, my father-in-law and a good friend. For my wife, it was her first marathon in two years; for my father-in-law, it was his first marathon in three years; and for my friend, Steve, it was his first marathon EVER. As for me, I was running my eleventh marathon and enjoying my second race (the first being the Squaw Valley Half Marathon) held in my new home in Tahoe. My wife and I are still new to the area, moving from Chicago in the fall of 2016.

Even though it was my eleventh marathon, I knew it was going to be the hardest (aka most fun) of the bunch. Running at elevation with some good climbing is something I have grown to love since moving from the flat state of Illinois. And this race didn't disappoint! The course begins in the heart of downtown Truckee, makes its way around beautiful Donner Lake, and inserts runners into a variety of trails and scenery along the way before returning to the finish line in Truckee.

I'm a bit of a hybrid when it comes to distance running: I love trail running but I also enjoy running on roads. Most of my ultrarunning friends subscribe to one or the other, and it shows in the races they run. The Truckee Marathon was a wonderful mix of the two: a fair amount of road running combined with running on the picturesque trails of Truckee. I absolutely loved the mix of the two! It was fun to let the legs loose on the roads and then tuck into the trails for some seclusion. In addition to the marathon, the race also offered a half-marathon and marathon relay option. Unlike many other events, the two races begin together in Truckee. I'm personally a fan of this because I like to see as many faces on the course as possible! It makes it that much more enjoyable to share the day with other runners, even if they aren't running the same race as you. The only downside? If you're running the marathon and feeling tired, you might regret your decision when you see the half-marathon runners peeling off for the finish at the halfway point!

Going into the race, I had my sights set on the win. I was using this race as a tune-up, hard effort in preparation for a 100-miler I'm running in November. Going into the race, my friends and family were asking me "what are your goals for the day?" That was actually the last question I received before starting the race, when my friend Jacob from Reno (who finished third overall in the marathon) saw me at the start line. My response was that I "was going to put in a strong effort and run hard," knowing that the tough course wouldn't lend itself to an easy day.

I began the race my taking the lead about a mile in, on the first climb of the day. I settled into a nice tempo and even though I was running harder than I expected early on, my heart rate was under control and I felt that my effort was where I wanted it to be. When I hit Donner Lake about a few miles into the race, I really hit my stride. I was cruising through the rolling hills around the lake, laying down some good miles before the biggest climb of the race at Northwoods Boulevard. Upon finishing that climb, I was still in good shape and had two very strong miles on the downhill section that followed into the midway point of the race. Coming into the half-marathon finish area, the emcee called out "and here is our first half-marathon finisher!"

After I turned the opposite direction and headed up a hill to continue the marathon, I could hear him say, “nevermind...that was our first marathoner! There he goes!” The majority of the second half of the race is run on various dirt and asphalt trails, and it was really fun! I slowed a bit in the second half, running positive splits by about three minutes. I was okay with that, as I pushed harder on the climbs in the first half of the race and still had some decent climbing to go in the second half. After finishing the final significant climb in Glenshire around mile 20, I hopped onto the Legacy Trail and had several nice, flowy miles heading back into downtown Truckee. Fortunately, my end result for the day was a first-place finish and the new course record!

As a side note, the Truckee Marathon is also a great race to spectate. There are numerous points on the course where spectators can see runners and catch up to them, even without transportation. I was happy to be able to hop on a bike after the race and ride back to see my family and friends running their final marathon miles on the Legacy Trail. Something like that certainly wouldn't be an option during the Chicago Marathon! Overall, I had a really fun day in Truckee. The weather was about as perfect as you can get for a marathon: very cool to start, slowly warming up throughout the morning and crystal clear blue skies. And, much like the Squaw Valley Half Marathon, the race staff was amazing! All of the staff and volunteers were incredibly uplifting and helpful to the racers. Thanks to everyone who made it a fun day for all of the runners!