# Taiwan Action Asia 50 by Michael Maddess

Running the 50km requires proper training and tapering rest before this event as very technical and not an easy flat road race by any means as challenging and more difficult from a technical standpoint than the HK50 series (even though the HK races go to higher elevation the Taiwan50 course has many more smaller hills that will constantly be thrown at you forcing you to be mentally alert much longer. A long mind game for the mentally strong so you need to be mentally tough.
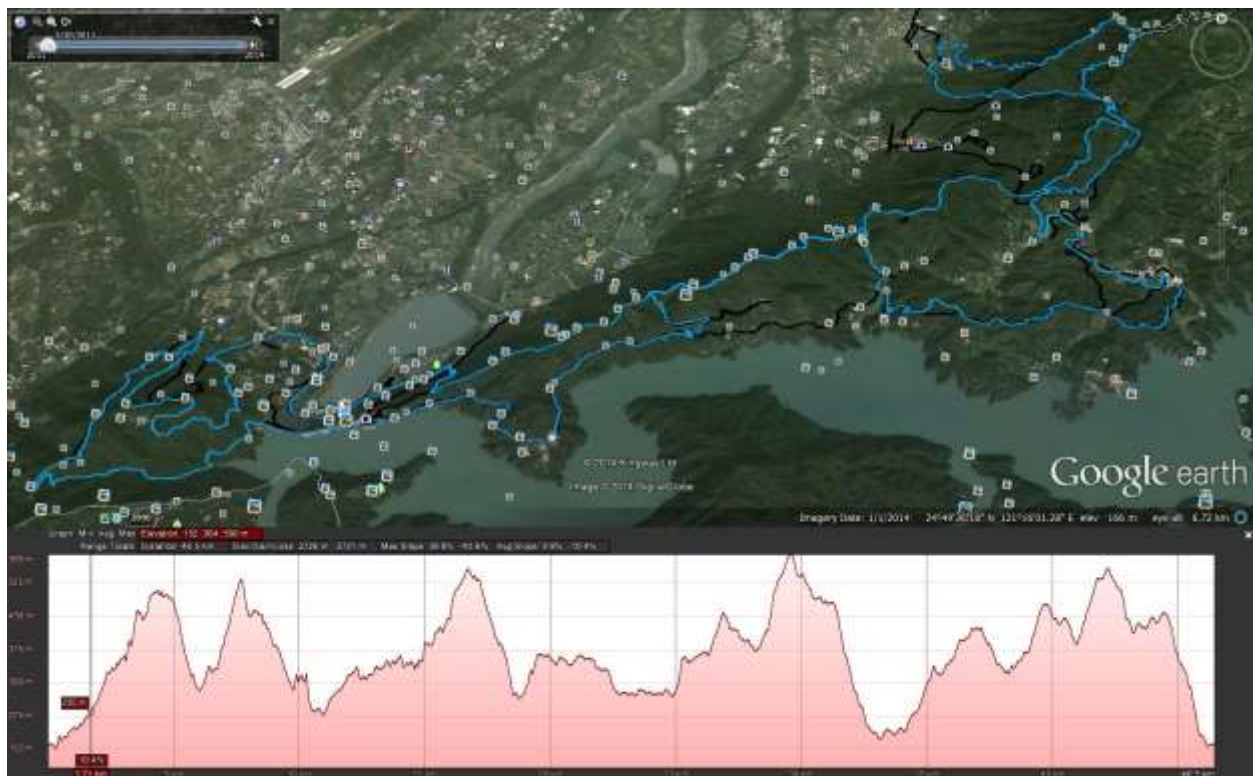
But don't worry if you prepare yourself correctly you'll accomplish this Taiwan 50 course and be rewarded with pride in completing one of the most technically difficult courses in Taiwan and the first officially recognized International Skyrunning event in Taiwan that you can brag to all your friends about.

Start to CP 1

The first check point is 10.5km and starts off with a 2 km road run gently uphill along Minfu Street staring at the bottom of the Shimen Dam (155m elevation) to

the main trail entrance of Shimen Shan at Huanhu Road which is probably the place you want to take your time and not get too excited and go out too fast as you want to go into this first 2km nicely relaxed and be able to run at a pace you can be able to have a conversation with someone next to you. You then start running on single track trails at elevation 250m. The next 2.6k estimated is hiking/running up Shimen Shan to lower peak at 493m at around 4.6km before you start going down some easy single track to a lower section of 290m at around 5.9km before hiking back up single track trails to highest point of Shimen Shan at 522m at 7.5km in distance. Easy in the meaning compared to later in the race this is easy with recycled car tires for stairs and well maintained paths as one reason we chose this section also for the 13km/21km is too give everyone a "taste of

adventure" or "taste of a technical single track course". For those that want more they will find out later what technical really means.

The course then has some great views of the reservoir coming down thru the trees and dips into a river stream for only 100meters or so which will make you walk/run along some rock boulders before hiking out and meeting more dirt trail single track and views heading down to road of the Shimen Reservoir. Again you want to take this section easy and not kill your legs on the downhill but try to be in complete control of yourself not racing others but focusing on the course ribbons and signage at junctions to make sure you don't miss any important turns and resting your body as it will be a long race.

A short run along the Dam and at around 10.5km (238m elevation) will be the first water checkpoint (bananas & water) and the location where the 5km will turn left so don't turn but go straight ahead if in 21km/50km. For this last section we used around 2 litres on a hot day so would recommend the same for runners, but definitely fill your 1.5 litre hydration system for the start of the race and don't even think of bringing a waist belt as will not be enough water and you will want to keep your hands free and available to help with odd section that has ropes where you will use your hands to pull yourself or trees that you can grab to go faster so please don't carry a water bottle in your hand as so old fashion and only for road racing and not for trail running. Expect in time to take at least 2 to 3 hours minimum for this section and longer if you're not fast on trails. At this 10.5km checkpoint believe again 1.5 – 2 litres recommended together with eating some food that you have brought with you (energy bar, nuts, dried fruit, etc) together with electrolyte or salt tablets every hour or so to not dehydrate and

loose too much salt. (You should always practice in your training runs with salt/electrolyte tablets/food as not recommended to experiment on race day as your stomach might not like so find out before the race what you like and what you don't like.

CP 1 to CP 2

Next section is a well-deserved break on your legs after the first 2 big hills on Shimen Shan in first 10.5km so running along the road is nice to relax and look out at the water to take your mind away from the race briefly and to just relax a bit for the next section.

After a 4 kilometers you will reach a road turn on left going up at 14.5km (342m elevation) and run up until a temple by construction on your right and enter the single track trail here for a gentle uphill trail that most runners can manage until they reach the main junction of the ridgeline at 15.6km (421m). I think between the check point and here not many will drink much fluid as you're probably running faster and not working that hard and probably have done this 5km quite fast in this section.

As 50km runners turn RIGHT / 21km runners turn LEFT at the main trail junction , the 50km runners are now slowly climbing more dirt single track trails up for the next 2km to an elevation of 554m at 16,7km before they start to descend down single track and stairs to the main Chengen Road, Dasi Township where they'll do a right turn for 100meters and left turn on next road by bridge and stay on road for another 100m until trail entrance on left side with stairs going up into trees at around 18km (270m) on Ercengping Agricultural Road. Walking up anything is always a good time to eat if hungry as can swing your hydration system around on your chest and reach in to grab food while you keep walking and moving and not

losing time. The next trails you will run are thru a flat jungle tree area that you can run quite fast with 1m high plants on your side for a few hundred meters before you reach a downhill run for a 100m coming out on a road crossing where the water checkpoint is just over 20km (CP2) at an elevation of 363m for one of the easiest sections of the whole race so enjoy CP1 – CP2 while it lasts as it starts getting more difficult after this and is best to stay well hydrated as you should be feeling good and relaxed when arriving at CP2 with this section taking 1.5 – 3 hours on average.

CP 2 to CP 3.