



WARNING - The longer the race, the more potential there is to relay more, as in this case.

Three of us runners – Laura Mason, Lisa Medina and I – carpoled to the RunTex 20-Miler in Georgetown this past weekend. Lisa has recently been running with Laura and some of the other girls, and was motivated to give the 20-Miler a go. Unfortunately, Teresa Medina (no relation) has been dealing with an unshakeable cold and did not run in this event; and unfortunately this disqualifies her from the Distance Challenge. You have my condolences, Teresa.

Georgetown and the RunTex 20-Miler

As you may already know, the 20-Miler has jumped to different towns and cities within the last 4 years. Some of you do not even realize that one year (2007) San Marcos hosted the 20-Miler. Nevertheless, I believe that after searching for a home for the 20-Miler that one may have been found in Georgetown.

Donnie O’Neal continues to be the race director for this event, and once again the race was a success. The venue for the event was Georgetown High School. I recently discovered that Donnie lives in Georgetown and manages the new RunTex there. Thus, the Georgetown Running Club has formed, and these members and RunTex support each other.

After the race I met and spoke with Dana Frazier from the Georgetown Running Club. She was excited about RunTex moving to Georgetown, the development of the Georgetown Running Club, and the RunTex 20-Miler being held in Georgetown. (<http://georgetownrunningclub.org/>) It seems to be a no-brainer that the RunTex 20-Miler stays in Georgetown, given the aforementioned circumstances.

Winter Running

It has been reported that, at the start of the race, the temperature was 38 degrees. I did not need to see a thermometer to know that it was cold. This 20-Miler and the temperatures reminded me of the 2006 Austin Marathon when, reportedly, the temperatures never rose above freezing. Hopefully after a few years you learn how to dress for most weather conditions. I opted for shorts, and layered with a short-sleeve running shirt and a long-sleeve running shirt. I also wore gloves and a cap. Laura and Lisa forgot their gloves!

Race Strategy

As I have mentioned before, if you are racing a running event, it is important to have a race strategy. Most runners applied the wisdom of running the 20-Miler slower than race pace, and as another opportunity to get a long run in with 700+ runners and the support of an organized event.

Here was my thought process. A few weeks ago, I ran 21 miles in San Marcos at a 7:15 pace. That run was very difficult. Nevertheless, I decided to pick up the pace a bit after recovering from that long run, and after rebuilding my confidence with the help of some speed workouts and motivation from Doug Framke. On the drive to the event, I began to think about stepping up the pace to a 7:00 pace. Dropping 15 seconds a mile for a long run such as this is a significant drop.

Then it dawned on me that the Austin Marathon is really just around the corner, and this may be the last long run I get in before the marathon. I thought it would be wise to run the race at a marathon pace. This would allow me to gather good indication as to my capabilities and thus help me fine tune my marathon pace. I sure would love to complete the marathon in less than 3 hours. To do so I would have to run a 6:52 pace. So now I would be dropping my pace down 23 seconds. I figured it was worth the test.

The race strategy was a success. I was able to exceed my intended pace and ended up running a 6:44 pace per mile. So that means I ran on the average 31 seconds faster per mile than a few weeks ago. Accomplishing this feat was a confidence builder! Now I will be able to fine tune my marathon race pace.

The Race

Laura Mason (Note – to whom I still affectionately refer as “honey”) ran well and obtained a P.R. for a 20-miler. Have you noticed that she has obtained numerous P.R.s lately?

We were also glad to see Tim and Sharon Bayliss running this event. Sharon fared well; and, although Tim did not race this event, he used it as a long training run to stay conditioned. (More about that later)

Oh yes; then there was our new running friend Lisa. I was reminded that Lisa had been running with Laura and her training group. I then became suspicious. Laura is becoming known for recruiting other runners and convincing them that they can accomplish feats beyond their imagination or current capabilities. (Sorry, honey.) Therefore, while we were driving to this event, I thought I would utilize the interrogation tactic that many women have generously applied to me when driving a long distance in a vehicle, and find out more about how she is here with us today. So I asked Lisa, “What has been your most recent long run?” “Fourteen miles,” she said. “Hmmm, what is the longest you have ever run?” “Fourteen miles,” she said. I said to myself, what the #%*1&^!? I would have never made so big a jump in mileage. I decided to not share that information with her, and to discuss the matter after she completed the event. Yeah, we had a little talk. I have to admit, Lisa will fit right in with Laura and her training group. She is hardcore. Congratulations on your accomplishment, Lisa! I am glad you survived.

I ran with a group of 5 men up to the 10-mile marker. For some reason I was inspired to inform them that I have a friend (Tim) out here running this race so that he can have another long distance run. Tim likes to position himself at the front of the race, so I thought he was ahead of us somewhere. It turns out that he passed us a few minutes after I had shared the information with the group. He blew by us as we were maintaining 6:30-6:45 pace. I wanted to run with him, but I knew that was not a good idea. He even warned me not to join him, for he was using the race as a hard workout for 10 miles. Tim was running 6:00 pace for 10 miles! We were humbled.

Post Race

After rehydrating and performing various other activities to aid in our recuperating from such a long run, our hunger began to grow. Tim recommended we dine at the Monument Café <http://www.themonumentcafe.com/html/cafe.htm>. He has been batting a thousand with his recommendations for eating establishments. If you are ever in Georgetown and looking for a place to eat, be sure to visit this establishment.

Distance Challenge

The RunTex 20-Miler is the 4th race in the Distance Challenge. Laura and I are the only remaining members from the club left in the D.C. The next D.C. event is the 3M Half-Marathon.

When I entered this D.C. for the 3rd time I created 3 intentions. The first intention is to finally complete the D.C. I have completed 67% of this intention.

The second intention is to place in my age group. I just moved into 2nd position with this race and am trying to hold my competitors off.

The third and loftiest intention is to wear the yellow jersey. For this intention to manifest, the first-place runner would have to drop out of the D.C. It is possible.

Next Running Event

The next major running event is the River Road 12 Mile Run on January 17th. I have enjoyed this run throughout the last few years for its relatively flat course and scenic views along the winding roads that parallel the river. I would probably rate this as one of my top 3 scenic running events.

See you at the finish line!

Randall Wood
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