

SARR Freedom Day 4 Miler **July 4th San Antonio, TX**



Britt Van Dine rallied two other San Marcos Runners Club members, **Randall Wood** and **Ed Mendoza** to run the **SARR Freedom Day 4 Miler**. Actually, Britt and I had chosen this race many weeks ago. I was telling Britt that I need to pick a race event so that I could have a goal and place myself on a running schedule instead of randomly deciding to run. I need more structure with my running.

1st Note - Ed and Britt met for lunch the day before this event, and Britt convinced Ed to run the event with us.

The first 500 registrants for this event received a quality technical shirt. I was the 492nd registrant!

Course Recon

This is a new course for this event. Britt and I like to know what to expect along the course, so we set out to gather more information. According to the National Shooting Complex in San Antonio, “The venue for this race is located on 671 acres of peaceful rolling hills and picturesque countryside.” Yet, the flier for this event said, “The course is on paved trails in the country setting and it was flat and fast.”

On our warm-up run/course reconnaissance we discovered the first hundred yards involved a steep decline, and thus a steep incline towards the finish. Furthermore, we heard that the first mile was a gradual decline and thus a fast first mile. We also looked at the enlarged course map that was available for viewing on race day. The map showed numerous sharp turns and two out-and-back sections. This reconnaissance proved to be of value to us. I adjusted my running accordingly, and it allowed me to run a smarter and more efficient race, thus maximizing my overall performance and experience.

½ Mile

The first 1/2 mile gave us our first out-and-back section. I enjoyed seeing the river of runners working their way down the side of the hill. Britt and I stayed together and we were able to see Ed about 20 seconds behind us.

Mile 2

Britt and I completed the first mile in 6:15. We ran together up into the 2nd mile. Britt had intended to run a 6:20 pace, and later told me he just did not have it in the legs that day. For me, the body was remembering what a 6:30 pace felt like, and I started to speed up to maintain that pace.

Last Mile/Finish

I saw the 0.2-mile hill that would be zapping my energy in a few minutes. This was a good time to mentally prepare myself and check to see how I was feeling. I passed three people going up the hill. I encouraged one young runner to come with me, but he was not able to. Besides trying to encourage him, I do find going up a hill easier if another runner is there by your side. What is the saying: "Misery loves company."

Once you reach the top of the hill, you immediately turn right and can see the finish line. The mind then screams RUN FOREST RUN, RUN HARD NOW FOREST, but the body's legs, lungs, and energy say otherwise. Then the mind and body met with each other and came up with the strategy of waiting for 10 seconds to recover from the hill and then speeding to the finish line. Good teamwork.

Britt was not far behind. I was able to see him take the corner and surely he had a similar experience.

Then both Britt and I were able to see and "hear" Ed take the corner. We began encouraging him to finish strong, and he was able to voice his experience for us by saying, "I hate you Britt!" We both laughed.

2nd Note – Ed had run the evening Firecracker 5K event the day before. Later Ed did tell us that he only made that comment because he knew we would laugh.

Overall we all enjoyed the course for the variety of terrain the course offered. It was well organized and the awards ceremony began promptly. Good times!

Randall Wood
SMRC Member