

Richmond Marathon 2008 RR with Photos

I registered for this one back in February, having had a positive experience in 2005 when I first ran “America’s Friendliest Marathon”. In the meantime, a lot of things took place in my life, including buying a new winter home in South Carolina and running more-than-acceptable BQ marathons at Boston in April and Clarence DeMar in September. CDM was very rewarding, as I secured my 3rd qualifier for Boston 2009 and locked up a BQ for 2010.

After CDM, I really was coasting with my running, and my subsequent “training” lacked its usual zeal and intensity. In fact; I didn’t follow any kind of training program at all and just went out each day and ran what I felt like. But I’ve been at this marathon game so long that I guess I instinctively did many of the right things in spite of myself. Between CDM and Richmond, I did one 20-miler and ran one half-marathon as a tune-up race. I also did numerous 10-12 milers. But the half-marathon was on the sand, and my feet took quite a beating. Up until Richmond, my right foot was swollen and my left heel hurt with every step. I picked up a horrendous head cold a week before Richmond, and it was so bad I was forced to DNS in a planned 10K. My back also hurt, probably from too much practicing on the golf range. Never had I felt so unprepared and physically unfit before a marathon. I considered bailing, but I knew that a few good friends were going, and figured “what the hell”. If I ran 4:00+ hours, it wouldn’t be the first time.

The weather forecast was not good, with rain expected all day Saturday and thunderstorms were anticipated just to make it interesting. How many pre-marathon excuses does one really need? What we got was excessive humidity, strong winds that never abated, and HEAT!!! The sun came out around mile 9, and that ELSO (Evil Life Sucking Orb) stayed with us for the duration. Without either sunglasses or even a hat, I cursed the sun like many others. In short, for most it was not a good day for running a quality marathon.

So what happened? I ran reasonably well. Why; I don’t know, but like my other marathons in the last two years, I felt strong throughout, and never once felt like I hit the wall or even muttered “never again”. In fact; I was feeling so good at the end that I kicked it in for mile 26 (passing many, like I had been doing for much of the second half), and then really put the hammer down for the final half-mile. I realized just before the half when it got disgustingly hot that a 3:45 wasn’t in the cards, but then concentrated on running under my 3:52 Boston time. I admit that what helped in the second half was the fan support, and was glad for the personalized bibs; i.e., “The Beast”.

The result was a satisfying 3:50:35. That represents my 4th qualifying time for Boston 2009, and my 2nd for 2010. My 3 marathons this year – run on different courses, but all with challenging (read hilly) second halves – resulted in remarkably consistent times. Boston was 3:52:54; Clarence DeMar was 3:49:15; with 2008 culminating in Richmond’s 3:50:35.

Here are the mile and cumulative splits for posterity:

1-----8:30:XX-----8:30:XX-----mistakenly hit my chrono at the 8K 1-mile clock

2-----8:29:21-----16:59.21-----solid consistent start

3-----8:41.77-----25:40.98

4----8:32.42-----34:13.40
5----8:29.06-----42:42.46
6----8:34.38-----51:16.84
7----8:24.XX-----59:40.84-----missed 7M marker; averaged miles 7 & 8
8----8:25.02-----1:08:05
9----9:04.14-----1:17:10-----bio break
10---8:25.04-----1:25:35
11---8:52.26-----1:34:27-----uphill
12---8:42.24-----1:43:09
13---8:39.03-----1:51:48
13.1-----1:52:46
14---8:27.95-----2:00:16
15---8:35.77-----2:08:52-----gel; bridge
16---8:48.55-----2:17:40-----sun; uphill
17---8:59.08-----2:26:39-----uphill
18---9:01.90-----2:35:41
19---8:40.72-----2:44:22
20---9:00.82-----2:53:23-----gel
21---9:24.12-----3:02:47-----headwind the rest of the way
22---9:21.62-----3:12:09
23---9:20.67-----3:21:29
24---9:33.37-----3:31:03
25---9:20.28-----3:40:23
26---8:37.15-----3:49:00-----smelling the barn
26.2-----1:35.-----3:50:35-----giving the cheering fans a show

Statistics:

Gun time – 3:50:47

Chip time – 3:50:35

Pace – 8:48

AG time – 3:09:53

PLP – 65.8%

Overall – 498/3007 (4316 were registered, so a lot of DNS and/or DNF due to weather)

Gender – 372/1764

Geezer division – 8/99

Here's a link to the unofficial photos -

<http://share.shutterfly.com/share/received/welcome.sfly?fid=e7c6e6a72fa4b9ec&sid=0Bbt2zNu4aMWIQ>