

My first half marathon

By Jonathan Banks

Let me start by saying that I am not a runner. I am a cyclist. Last November my wife, Nici, decided that she was going to run a half marathon in April. For some reason I decided that if she could do it then so could I. Talk about a dumb idea. I had run a 5K last spring but that is about it. I put together a training plan and with some assistance and feedback from some friends I started training. My plan started in January and built up gradually and with my wife's help I stuck to my training schedule. Unfortunately this meant that I was not doing as much riding as I would like. After getting fit for some new shoes and getting some good clothes I was running well and feeling good. The first run over 10 miles felt like a huge accomplishment. I built up pretty quick and as such I started having some slight aching in my right knee around the tendons. Fortunately it only hurt after the long run and went away in a day or so after the long run. My long runs were staying at a decent 10:30 minute mile pace and the only bad thing that happened on both my 11 and 12 mile runs is that my gel fell out of my pocket leaving me with only one gel for the run. Finally the day came for the half marathon and after getting up at 5 am to drive into Dallas we were ready to run. I brought a water bottle with me because I decided that I would rather carry it and not have to even slow down at the rest stops. I also ran with two gels in my hand, to prevent losing them! The course was a little hillier than I had anticipated but it was very nice as it went out to a local lake and then through a very nice neighborhood. The only problem that I really had through the first part of the run was that my heart rate monitor strap was slipping and I was having to pull it up every half mile. I had to stop after mile six and tighten the strap so that it was

not bothering me anymore. The run felt good and I was running well and the weather was great. It was in the upper 50's when we started and low 60's when we finished and the sun was just coming out. The last mile did take forever! The longest training run that I had done was 12 miles so when I hit the 12 mile mark my body wanted to stop but knowing that I only had 1 mile left I did my best to increase my speed and run to the finish as fast as possible. I finished with a time of 2 hours 22 minutes and 30 seconds. I was only 2 minutes and 30 seconds over the time that I wanted to finish in but I had done it! I got some water and I walk to the side of the finishing shoot to watch Nici finish. After waiting for her for a few minutes and watching a friend of mine from NC finish I saw Nici walk up next to me with water in her hand. She had finished only 4 minutes after me in 2 hours and 26 minutes. Nici's goal was to finish in around 2 hours and 30 minutes and she had easily beaten that! Over all it was a great day and it was a lot of fun. I guess that I may be turning into a runner after all. I am ready to get back to riding more on the weekend and during the week.