

First time to be first

By Charles Clines

IRVING -- Linda Griggs knew late in the race that she was in front of the other women in the Secret Service 5K, conducted April 29 in Irving. So, she kept waiting for another woman to eventually catch up and pass her. It usually happens. And she kept waiting. Before she knew it, though, she was across the finish line. First woman.

"This is a first," said Linda, a 43-year-old Coppell resident, who'll celebrate her 44th birthday May 8. "I always place in my age division, but I've never won overall."

Linda finished in 21 minutes, 19 seconds, which was 21 seconds ahead of second-place Brooke McGonigle.

Linda credited her victory, and her fastest 5K time, on her step into triathlon training some 11 weeks ago. She said the swimming apparently has increased her lung capacity. On April 8, she competed in her first triathlon, the Southlake Ironman, a sprint distance that includes a 300-meter swim, a 12-mile bike ride and a 5K. Linda said her time was about 1-hour, 17 minutes.

"I was slow on the bike," she said.

"I just wanted to do something different," said Linda of her decision to begin triathlons. "I wanted to add some variety to my running."

Linda resumed a consistent running program about eight years ago when she ran her first half marathon in Dallas. "I ran track in high school, but hadn't run much before I did the half. That's the farthest I've ever run. I like the short-term pain (of 5Ks)."

Family (she has two children) obligations prevented her return to running much sooner, she said. Linda said she runs only 10 to 12 miles a week, but since training for triathlons, adds a bike ride and a swim once a week.

She began training in a triathlon program in Coppell,



and said it has been a great experience. There are several levels, including one for those just beginning. And the program helps with a person's weaknesses. Her's, she said, was swimming.

No matter. Her running has improved. So, even if she swims like a rock, she likely can make up for lost seconds on the road. A first-place running trophy should prove it.



.Leighton ``Pops" Railsback, a longtime runner in the Metroplex, won the 70-older division at the Secret Service 5K. He also believed he had beaten Clyde DeLoach for the first time in 25 years of trying to catch him. ``He told me I had beaten him," Leighton said. However, when the results were announced, Clyde's name wasn't there. ``I guess he didn't enter. So, officially I still haven't beaten him," Leighton said.

Two upcoming races offer 5K and 10K distances: Mayfest in Fort Worth on May 6 and Dino Dash on May 13. To get closer to nature, consider the Buffalo Boogie. See the [calendar](#).