

## *Cool time at El Scorcho*

By Kelly “K2” Richards  
El Scorcho... los Locos!

Hey, have you heard about El Scorcho, it's a 25K and 50K race in the middle of July that starts at midnight? No, but anything called El Scorcho has to have a cool shirt. Here began the insanity to run this inaugural event... a cool shirt. Like any runner needs another shirt! I bet when the race creators thought up El Scorcho they originally thought to call it El Stupido.



Kelly (K2) Richards, past president of the Lake Grapevine Runners and Walkers Club (RAW) was among the 225 who participated in the El Scorcho 25K and 50K runs at Trinity Park in Fort Worth. The races started at midnight and finished Sunday (July 15) morning.

Like most distance runners, I've seen many sunrises but few episodes of David Letterman or Saturday Night Live. It's in bed, lights out by 10:00 p.m. for me. So running a race that began at midnight presented a unique challenge; when to sleep? I found taking a long nap on Saturday afternoon easier than expected and got up at 9:30 p.m. feeling like it was actually early morning. This was great since I only run in the morning.

Just over 200 runners started the race which made the first 5K loop a bit crowded, but soon the runners were spread out and there was plenty of room on the path. The advertised well-lit, mostly crushed limestone path was a bit of an exaggeration. The course was surprisingly dark and there was plenty of concrete, grass and pot-hole filled roads to run along. It seemed to be a sprained ankle just waiting to happen. Most everyone I spoke to has at least one ankle turn story, but I didn't hear of any serious injuries. I had the pleasure of running the loop 10 times where on my last loop I thought I had every un-even surface, curve and curb memorized. Then I ran off course a few feet and ended up in a dirt pile. Because it was my last loop and I merely stumbled rather than falling I chalked this up to part of the adventure.

Although the race was virtually in the middle of the city, it had the zany feel of a trail or adventure race. Seeing spectators camped out for the night was a reminder that many runners have a Motley crew of friends as nutty themselves. Running in the dark was a bit surreal; trying to avoid pitfalls and being hypnotized or nauseated by bobbing flashlights made the race adventurous. The midnight start made it unique if not downright quirky. The (hot) mid-July race date made it an absurd idea (although for Texas it was downright cool). The combination created a, “Yeah, I'm one bad-ass runner” attitude. Somewhere around the seventh or eighth loop this might have turned into, “OK, so I'm a dumb ass too.”

The Lake Grapevine Runners and Walkers (RAW) had nearly 20 members running the two distances, plus we had a support crew and our own unexpected paparazzi. Our crew offered excellent support; fresh water bottles after each loop, the sweetest, juiciest watermelon I've ever tasted, pizza, lots of cheers, a few jeers and endless words of encouragement. The one that caused me to burst out laughing was, “You're NOT almost there, your NOT!”

The race was a lot of fun and a great opportunity for runners to challenge themselves competitively and to enjoy our sport in a different fashion. I'm already looking forward to next year's event.