

Veteran, novice win at 2008 FW Marathon

Talk about different ends of the spectrum in regards to marathon running. The men's winner of the second Fort Worth Marathon on Sunday, Nov. 9, in Fort Worth finished his amazing 106th 26.2-mile trek while the women's winner had never experienced running that far. In fact, it not only was her first marathon, it was her first competitive race.

Dave Emerson, 50, of Grapevine won the men's title in 2:58:11.2 while Krista Huffman, 28, of Dallas finished in 3:40:32.1 to take the women's title. For Emerson, it proved to be a lucrative outing, too, as he won the drawing for the \$1,000 awarded to marathon finishers. Last year, the marathon winner, Gary Anderson, also won the drawing.

The accompanying half also had a couple of winners who usually don't run long distances, but came away to top awards. Alex Rojas, 19, of Plano ran the half to see how close he is to possibly snaring a Boston Marathon-qualifying time at the White Rock Marathon in December. He won with a 1:23:35.5. It will be his first attempt at the distance. Women's half winner Maria Martinez ran only her second 13.1-mile distance, the first coming in Waco two weeks ago. She won Fort Worth in 1:41:07.3 and she, too, added to her bank account by winning the drawing for the \$500 awarded for half marathon finishers.

But it was that kind of day for the marathon that's trying to gain a foothold in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. About 150 registered this year for the two distances compared to the 21 who finished both races.

Emerson was the first male across the finish line even though he was rebounding from a "crash and burn" in Waco just two weeks ago at the Miracle Match Marathon. Does he run a marathon every week? "Pretty much," Emerson said. Of course, he also throws in an ultra distance every now and then. He was pleased with his time even though his legs were "dead" on the cool (mid-40s when the race started) morning at the event that starts and finishes inside LaGrave Field after an out-and-back route on the Trinity Trails. "Not bad for an old guy. I just turned 50 on the 5th," he said. He also plans to run the marathons in Dallas, Houston, Austin and Fort Worth.

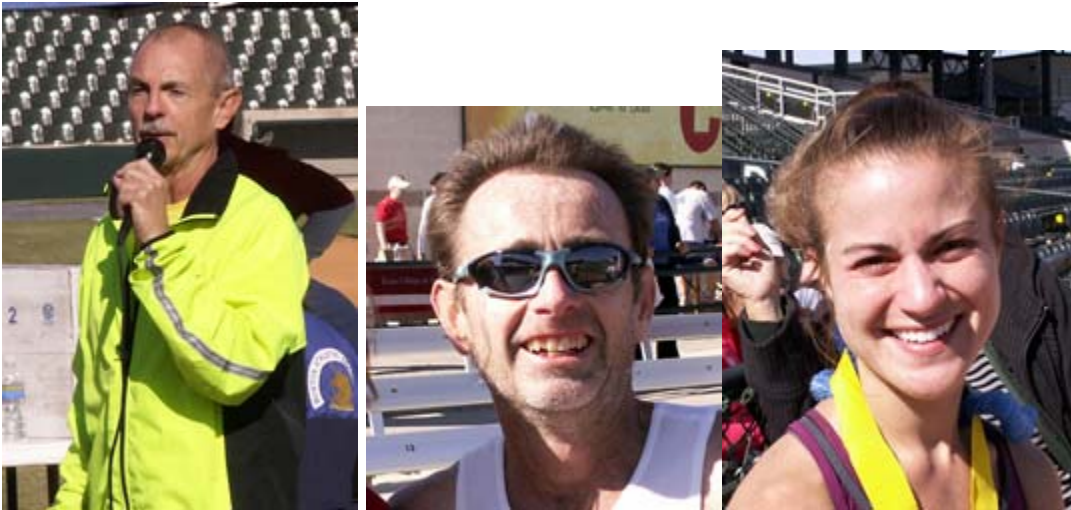
Huffmann, expressing surprise that she was the first female, said she entered the race as a practice run before the White Rock Marathon in December. "I had never entered a race before, so I kind of had to use this as a practice run." She began running in January and already has climbed to marathon distance. Even though she was hurting when she finished, she said her Dallas plans are still go. "I asked my personal trainer what his New Year's resolution was, and he said he didn't really have one but was going to train for the White Rock. He asked me to train with him, and I said I'd do it."

The men's marathon runner-up was Gary Anderson of Benbrook. Anderson won the title last year. Anderson, who led until about mile 21, said his right leg began tightening somewhat and he didn't want risk an injury by trying to match Emerson's breakaway

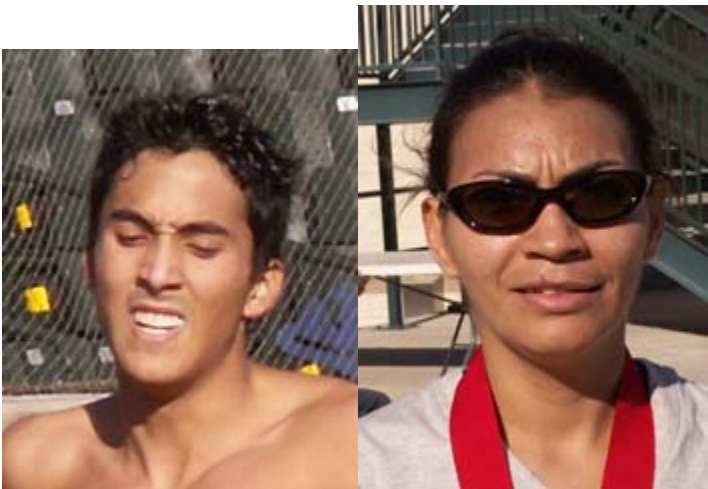
about mile 22. "I'm running San Antonio next week and didn't want to get too hard, though I started faster than I had wanted."

Todd Reynolds, 40, who was second to Anderson last year, finished second in the half. He chose the shorter distance because he's recovering from running the New York Marathon, where he posted a 2:53.56.

There also was a \$250 for the best water stop, and the Da Girls at Mile 4 won that money



From left: Race director Steve Looney, marathon winners Dave Emerson and Krista Huffman



From left: Half marathon winners Alex Rojas and Maria Martinez