

## **Rahr Oktoberfest wet, fun and crowded, and my time apparently floated away**

By Charles Clines

It was kind of fun to run in the rain Saturday morning (Sept. 25) at the first Rahr Oktoberfest, though it appears that it was not my lucky day. I enjoyed the run over the course that was mostly downhill for at least half the race and then slightly uphill heading toward the finish. But despite the fun, I came up a little short, as I will explain. Thankfully, I was wearing my Vibrams and never felt waterlogged as I would have with regular running shoes.

Checking in was easy. I was given a bracelet upon entering the activity area to signify that I was indeed 21 and old enough to drink. My \$35 entry fee entitled me a T-shirt and a Rahr glass. It was lightly raining when I arrived, but became harder the closer it got to the 9 a.m. start time. The start was delayed about 10 minutes, and the rain had subsided somewhat. However, it picked up during the race and there were several puddles on the course that were no problem with the Vibrams.

It was crowded on the narrow streets near the start at Rahr Brewery with almost 800 runners and walkers trying to find running and walking room. But once on W. Terrell and then Hemphill, the congestion eased. If you started in the middle or farther back, though, it took awhile to finally break loose. The course was mostly downhill for more than half of the first part of the race (never saw a mile marker, so had no idea how far into the race). Then we began a gradual climb back to the finish, but it wasn't too exerting. Had to splash through a big puddle just before the finish line.

But my real troubles began inside the rebuilt brewery (the roof had caved in this year after a heavy rain). The activities were moved inside the brewery because of the rain, it was VERY loud and crowded and the lines were long for the beer stations. I stood in line for several minutes and when I reached the beer, the keg had stopped working. It wasn't pouring. After waiting several minutes, the problem finally was solved and everything was right with the world again. (I had the Oktoberfest for the first round, but recommend the Ugly Pug).

The food was good and plentiful -- barbecue sandwiches, pasta and bread, sausage and several other handouts. When the awards were announced and they finally reached my age division, my name wasn't called though I had a faster time than any of the names that were called in the 65-69 age division. (Saturday night I began wondering if the strap on the Vibrams might have blocked the signal from the chip to the mat. Maybe that's why my time wasn't recorded.) When I searched online at the Rahr Oktoberfest results page after returning home, my name wasn't even listed (and there is no link to report results problems). So, chalk up the race as fun and crowded (though it probably would have been much better outside than inside) but marked with a few glitches that affected me. Hopefully, everyone else came out OK. Oh yes, a couple of the D-FW top runners,

Kiplimo Chemirmir and Laura Nelson won their respective male and female divisions and earned big, homemade Rahr steins

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