

Growth is great, but FW Turkey Trot needs some tweaks to handle it

By Charles Clines



If you were among the record turnout of 12,000 or so at the Fort Worth YMCA Turkey Trot in November at Camp Bowie Blvd., then you might have noticed there needs to be some changes made to handle the crowd.

These might be more than a tweak or two, though. But I'll call them tweaks anyway. The No. 1 change needs to be the 5K course. The start on Camp Bowie needs to be moved. As it is now, most of the last walkers had just cleared Camp Bowie as the leaders were crossing on Curzon to reach the finish. If the race grows larger, then there could be problems. Also, I've never liked the idea of walking back to a starting line. It makes it difficult to move everyone behind the line.

Then several runners wanted to know why the mat that activates the computer chip on their shoes covers only half of one side of the right lanes on Camp Bowie. If a person wants to be timed, he/she has to cross the mat, which caused quite a jam at times. Why not have the mat all the way across the right side of Camp Bowie?

Change No. 2 should be the 10K start. When the event was drawing about 3,000 to 4,000, it wasn't much of a problem to have the start on the through street through the parking lot for the strip center. However, because several cars park on Winthrope after the street leaves the parking lot, the street narrows considerably. There were more than a few runners grumbling about having to jam in to continue down the street.

Also, I've said for years that there needs to be a P.A. system at the start. Too many runners have no idea what's going on because they can't hear instructions amid the noise of the crowd. Announcer Scott Murray was doing a great job near the registration/vendor booth area, but the speakers can be heard for just so far.

I realize that most of those who participate in the Turkey Trot aren't aware or really don't think too much about them. They're there to have fun and work off a few calories before digging into a Thanksgiving dinner.

Even with those few problems, participants enjoyed pre-race Starbucks, post-race snacks and a colorful T-shirt.

Yet, if the event continues to grow, then it would make a smoother, safer and more enjoyable morning if the event tweaked those few things.