

Running with the dogs was fun

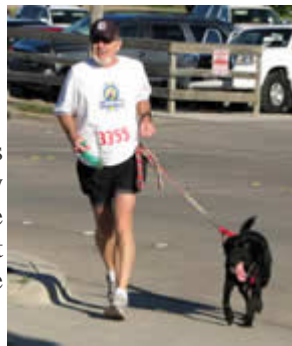
By Charles Clines



Well, I know my dog, Connie, had more fun than I did at the FWRC's River Ranch Hound Hustle 5K on Sunday, April 19. She was in sniffing heaven.

When we pulled up in the parking lot in the Stockyards, she was jumping around as if the seat had suddenly turned hot underneath her. She saw other dogs outside and was whining in anticipation of joining them. Ahh, the sniffing to be done.

worried about was death. She definitely problem for her because The difference is that sniffing at the grass, fire



This was the first time I had taken Connie, a mix of mostly Lab, to a race and I just wanted to see what would happen. She loves people and usually other dogs, so the only thing I was really whether she would lick someone or something to wanted to. Running that far usually is no I've taken her out for 3-4-mile runs quite often. those runs usually involve several stops for hydrants, street-sign posts, etc.

I've also learned to tie the leash around my waist while running with her. This has saved my shoulder much pain because she often tugs at the leash and she's much easier to control when I have my whole body in charge rather than just my arm. I use a halter on her, and she has a love/hate relationship with it. She doesn't like it on, but she knows she's going out when it's on.

Anyway, when the race started (after much acquainting herself with other four-legged friends), her attitude seemed to be go faster than everyone else. We passed several other dogs and their human friends for about three-quarters of a mile. But Connie suddenly needed a potty break. Luckily, I always carry a baggie with me. After the pause and clean-up, we were on our way again, but her desire to be first was waning. After another stop to drink out of the water pans provided at the water stop, we were on our way again. By the time we reached the halfway turnaround point, Connie's attitude seemed to reflect mine during the last few miles of a marathon....where's the sag wagon?

After a pee stop (hers), a couple of short walks and another water stop, she did manage to stay with me for a slow jog to the finish even though her tongue was almost hanging to her paws. If she were tired, she quickly forgot it when given some of the dog biscuits provided at the food court and back among the other dogs.

So, I think she had a lot of fun. I'm not sure how much I had by trying to keep her from sniffing every dog there and then "dragging" her to the finish, but I'd do it again, especially at that race. Although the majority of participants didn't bring dogs, the race certainly was dog friendly with pans of water on the course and treats at the finish. She also got to bring home a second-place dog dish (there were only two runners in my age division).

Now, we'll have to work on lowering her PR of 31:26.