

Texas Showdown in San Antonio

A Texas-sized field of half-marathon runners took to San Antonio's streets for the second annual Rock 'n' Roll San Antonio Marathon & ½ Marathon on Nov. 15. Leading the half-marathon finishers were two Texans who arrived at the finish line less than one second apart.

After racing the 13.1-mile distance stride-for-stride, Westly Keating, a University of Texas Pan American graduate out of Pharr edged Texas A&M Corpus Christie grad Shadrack Songok of Kenya by less than a full body width at the Alamodome finish line. Both runners, making their half-marathon debuts, finished with identical times of 1:05:24.

Currently a high school Chemistry teacher, Keating was a five-time collegiate all-American at the University of Texas Pan-American. He and Shongok broke away from the other half-marathon runners after mile two, setting the pace for the lead marathon pack over the first 10 miles. Both runners are veterans on the track over 10,000 meters, each having run sub 28:25 in college.

California resident and pre-race favorite Josh Cox, 34, finished third in 1:06:44. Cox, who set the American record over 50 kilometers at the P.F. Chang's Rock 'n' Roll Arizona in January, was using San Antonio as his final tune-up for the California International Marathon in Sacramento on December 6.

Houston's Mary Davies, 27, won the women's half-marathon with a 1:18:16. Defending Texas Showdown champion Melisa Christian of Dallas finished second in 1:18:31. Allison Macsas of Austin rounded out the top three with a 1:18:58.

San Antonio resident Daniel Jess won the Texas Showdown for the marathon in 2:36:58. Jess, who finished fourth at the Rock 'n' Roll Chicago Half Marathon in August, was well off his pre-race goal of breaking 2:25, but did manage to finish after dropping out of the October 11th Chicago Marathon at 18 miles in near-freezing temperatures.

Jess, who took home \$2,000 for the Texas Showdown along with \$500 as the top finisher from Bexar County, won the race on his mother's birthday, and his wife Lindsay is expecting the couple's first child.

Kate Brown, 31, of San Antonio, won the women's Texas Showdown for the marathon. Her time of 3:01:50 was good for ninth place overall and third U.S. finisher.