

Runner has logged 59 marathons despite back surgery

Submitted by Fiona Green

It takes a special person to run a marathon. 26.2 miles is not for the faint of heart. Even for the average athlete, preparing for and completing the distance requires dedication and hours of training.

Ten years ago, Claude Hicks Jr. (then 37) of Fort Worth, had his three lower vertebrae fused together because of an injury. His doctor said that the one thing he probably would not be able to do would be run a marathon. Because Claude, who has his own lawn mowing business, was not a runner at the time, this news did not upset him too much.



Six years later, however, Claude, decided to start running as his mother was training for the Disney half marathon and wanted her children to accompany her. After running a successful half, Claude decided to put his training to good use and ran his first full marathon at the 2004 Cowtown. Since then, he has proved his doctor wrong countless times, running an impressive 59 marathons throughout the states -- sometimes two in a weekend.

He selects his races from marathonguide.com or finds out about the more obscure events through word of mouth. While just thinking about all that running makes most of us tired, 47-year-old Claude is clearly energized through running and barely requires any recovery time between events.

The hard part is not the running itself, he explains, but the expense and the travel involved -- airport delays, car rental, etc., which can all be quite challenging. Averaging around 4 hours. 30 minutes for his marathons. with a PR

of 3:50, Claude, when asked why he chooses to run so many marathons, refers to the incredible feeling of accomplishment after completing 26.2 miles. When asked for his favorite marathon, he hesitates before choosing Houston, explaining that every marathon he has run has been his favorite at the finish line.

His short-term goal is to run a marathon in all 50 states (he hopes to cross 30 of the states off his list this year). Once he has achieved this goal, he would like to reach the 100 mark before tackling every marathon in Texas, trail and road. While Claude is not a sponsored athlete, he would love to find a company interested in supporting him in his quest. He believes any company investing in him would get their money's worth because he likes to stand out in the crowd. He often sports wild-looking tights and believes that a singlet with a cool company logo would fit in just right!

Anyone interested can contact Claude at alotoflawn@yahoo.com.