

White Rock telecast good, but needs help

It was great to be able to sit back Sunday morning and watch the Wellstone White Rock Marathon on WFAA-TV (Channel 8). The telecast came on at 9 a.m. and lasted until after the men's winner was interviewed. Frank Shorter, the 1972 Olympic gold medal winner (as if we need to say that each time), provided great expert commentary, and announcer Todd Whitthorne was a good complement.

The viewers mainly had helicopter views of the leaders and other runners, though there were a few ground-level shots. Though the race coverage was not minute-by-minute, viewers always had a sense of what was happening with the leaders. Julie Henner, who was riding in the lead car covering the lead woman, also provided good reports. And she didn't have much to report as Svetlana Ponomarenko had taken a sizeable lead over the women and, because of the women elite's 17-minute head start, was by herself most of the way. As Shorter pointed out, that made her course-record run of 2:29:55 even more impressive. The main drama came later when the question became whether men's leader and eventual winner Moses Kororia would catch Ponomarenko and earn the \$25,000 bonus for being the first across the finish line. However, Shorter calculated the mile splits of each and figured Kororia would indeed catch her, which happened at about mile 24.

There also were interesting features of Kelsey Andrews, the junior level race director who has learned to adapt to having one leg, and blind runner Harry Cordellas. Everything combined made for an interesting couple of hours.

The main complaint I had was the lack of on-screen names of the leaders. If one hadn't been watching the telecast from the beginning, chances are he or she would never have known that the men's leader was Moses Kororia or the name of the women's leader. When the announcers did mention their names, which wasn't often, it would have been virtually impossible to know the spelling of the names. And there wasn't much background provided of the elite runners. Shorter did note that Kororia had run a 1:01 something in Kenya and a 1:03 something at the Chicago Half Marathon. But he didn't say when, or if he did I didn't hear it. But other than those minor annoyances (at least they were for me), the telecast was a welcome addition to the White Rock. The only other addition I would have made to the telecast would have been showing some of the bands and other attractions along the course. Mainly, though, it was a telecast well done.