

RUNNING SHORTS

Ultra-distance racing season quickly approaching

By Niki Swearingen

The blistering temperatures of August arrived with a bang, and so too will the ultra-distance racing season.

Some of us are flickering with sparks of anticipation, anxiously awaiting the first big race. Others of us have long been ignited and we burn with a blue flame of fury, ready to blaze our way through the finish line.

Who will go the distance this year? Whose flame will still stand? Will it be raging and roaring with radiance or smoldering and starving for fuel to fan the flame?

As eager and excited as I am, I know that I must burn with caution. Burning with reckless desire could leave me charred in the aftermath of an untamed wildfire. I love ultra-racing and pushing my body and mind past perceivable limits. Distance running has fueled my spiritual flame in many ways, however; I know that there exists a fine line between fanning the spiritual flame and igniting a fierce fire I have no business playing with.

Unfortunately, it only takes a single spark to cause a catastrophic combustion. Embers burning too intensely for training, racing, running farther and running faster can quickly explode into an all consuming cataclysm, causing us to forget our chief purpose here on earth.

I recognize that a small portion of why I run ultra-distances is for egotistical and prideful reasons. I must confess that when I cross the finish line a sense of satisfaction surges within me. I have a selfish desire to be set apart, to be distinguished. Ultra-distance racing does that for me. I pray that God will extinguish this false flame and that He instead will allow my heart to burn with a righteous flame of joy because I have and can only truly be sanctified by Jesus Christ.

Each of us has been given individual gifts and passions that fuel us from within. Ironically, when we burn with self-centered ambition it is these God given gifts and passions that Satan uses to reduce us to a pile of ashes. It is my prayer that every one of us will put our pride aside and realize what it is that we have been called to do. I pray that we will carry our flames, igniting and rekindling fires that have never or no longer burn with desire and love for our God.

Go Run!

Contact: go_run_finish@yahoo.com

Race Results:

Coach Fran Charities 5K, College Station, August 18

Robert Duncan 19:02 (1st AG)

Skipper Nethery 32:06

Ken Johnson 33:10 (3rd AG)

Upcoming Events:

August 25 - Heat Wave 5K and 1-Mile Run/Walk, 8 a.m., Bowers Stadium Parking Lot, SHSU, Huntsville. Register at the starting point. \$1 entry.