

Singing a Different Tune from Blues City, USA

I stood in the median of the street looking like a bum as David turned in the drive behind my parents' house. I told him he could pick me up on the back side of my parent's house, I didn't tell him I'd wait in the median of the street. He did reverse back and we caught our flight out of Houston on a beautiful fall morning to Little Rock. David's mother, Marcia, took an extended lunch break to pick us up from the airport and we met up with Melissa for lunch at Pasta Jack's to celebrate her birthday. We didn't embarrass Melissa by singing happy birthday but we did wish her another great year of fun and success. After loading up on carbs, David drove us to his mom's house while the ladies finished up their work day. The doggies were excited to see David again, especially Kayla, his Weimaraner from his days at UH. I helped him with some "son duties" at home, and then we went to Bryant High School to pick up Marcia and drive to Memphis.

We crossed the mighty Mississippi River into Tennessee and made our way to the Cook Convention Center for the St. Jude Marathon Expo. Marcia waited in the car, while David and I picked up our packets and walked around the vendors. We snagged deals on shoes and shorts and David stocked up on Stinger Waffles. We found our way back out front where our escort, Marcia, was waiting and she drove us to her sister's house. Jeanie and Paul welcomed us all like family and I quickly felt at home. We could not ask for a better or a more comfortable arrangement. For 2 nights, they provided us each with a room to ourselves and a warm comfortable bed. David and I put our bags in our rooms then went out to eat a Persian/Mediterranean dinner at Kebab International. The tasty hummus and babaganoush with pita bread, rice and lamb donner was excellent fuel for our race.

Before returning to the house, David and I stepped inside a grocery store to purchase an unusual combination of bananas and wine. The bananas were for us, the runners, and the wine was for Marcia and Jeanie, the supporters. We walked up and down the store but could not find the aisle with shelves of wine. As it turns out, Tennessee has a law that restricts the sale and delivery of wine, so we had to go next door to the liquor store. This was interesting because the new job David starts once we return to Houston is a wine merchant for the grocery store HEB, a job that would not exist in Tennessee. We found a wine to suit the ladies and made it back to relax, enjoy in conversation and go over race day logistics before retreating to bed.

My alarm sounded at a quarter till 6, breaking my deep slumber. I drank some fluids and stretched some before going downstairs for breakfast. Jeanie graciously prepared scrambled eggs, which David ate with juice and a Powerbar, and I ate with ham, toast and an orange. I went back upstairs to finish my stretching and my pre-race routine then gathered my things. Jeanie took over escort duties today and drove us into downtown, dropping us off just blocks from the start. She and Marcia then parked the car and walked to Jeanie's son's condo along the course to wait comfortably until it was time to watch us run past. David and I walked towards the start at Beal Street for a Kodak moment of his debut marathon with Robert Church in the distance. We stretched for a little while then headed towards the finish area in AutoZone Park to drop off our sweat bags.

We warmed up back to the corrals and waited our turn to start the marathon, which was different from any other marathon I had run. Marathoners and half marathoners started together. The elite corral (6:30 pace and faster) went off at 8am, followed by my corral (6:31-7:00 pace) a minute later. David was in the next corral (7:01-7:30 pace) that started at 8:03am and each subsequent corral (in 0:30 pace intervals), started every 2 minutes. Neither David nor I wore a watch, so we had to do a little math from the time shown on the clock every mile along the course to figure our pace. My strategy was simply to run even at 6:30 pace the entire race and finish in 2:50. Running that consistently however is very hard to accomplish, so I felt comfortable using the first 5k to warm up. A strong and chilled wind blew in from the Mississippi River, so I tucked in behind some runners as we ran down Riverside Drive. We turned back into town, ran up a slight hill and I strolled through the 5k in 20:52.

Drumbeats echoed from the group performing underneath the skywalk by the Cook Convention Center. My pace naturally quickened to this beat as the course took us by the iconic Pyramid of Memphis. The course wended through a couple streets and lead us through the campus of St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. Tons of families, doctors, physicians and nurses lined both sides of the street creating a scream tunnel for over a quarter mile. I'd almost compare it to the Wellesley College girls along the Boston Marathon course. I breezed through the first 10k in 41:10.

The number of runners around me began to thin as we continued running down N. Parkway Ave towards the Memphis Zoo in Overton Park. The park was beautiful and it allowed my mind to wonder and not think about running. Many families were out cheering, which lifted my spirits even higher. The park exit was around 15k, and I felt relaxed running through in 1:02. Being a seasoned marathon runner I was not worried to be a minute off pace, I knew there were a lot of miles in front of me yet, which included passing by the heart on the building of the Le Bonheur Children's Hospital, where Jeanie works.

I ate a GU as I approached the mile 10 water station, 1:05:41 into the race. I struck up a quick conversation with a couple runners whom I had finally chased down. They were running the half marathon which would split off from the full marathon near downtown shortly before mile 13. I ran through the first half in 1:25:39, landing me in a great position to run a negative split and finish with my goal time of 2:50. There was an awkward U-turn on 4th Street that made us run 100 meters down then 100 meters back. If the course was a little short on distance, couldn't they have just started the race further back, anyway, I trucked onward. There was no one in sight after I wished good luck to the runner I passed near mile 15. I took an electrolyte pill and another GU before washing them down at the next water station.

The back half of the course was not closed off to traffic and I encountered some near conflicts at unpoliced intersections and driveways with cars pulling up and crossing in front and behind me. It certainly kept me on my toes, though as they say, no harm no foul. No matter what direction the course turned, the wind seemed to be constantly at our face. I became really aware of this on Cooper Street which was a half mile uphill into the wind. I finally saw a turn up ahead, but Young Avenue provided no relief from the wind. Looking back on the race, however, the wind helped keep me cool as the mercury rose into the 60s.

I crossed 30k right on pace in 2:01:46. I felt relaxed as I made the turn onto N. Parkway at mile 21 and was on my way towards downtown Memphis. I heard a band rocking it out really hard along the street. So hard in fact that after they finished a set, a branch fell from the tree above. They hurriedly picked it up and moved it off the course as I ran by. The half marathon walkers (on their 7th mile) cheered me on from across the street expressing their awe at the speed in which I gracefully ran. A couple spectators who were runners themselves commented on how smooth I looked as I ran past. I do hear these things as I run, but this late in the game, I'm focused so I don't react.

The Pyramid was becoming very ominous as it never seemed to get closer. I felt my stride starting to waver as I crossed mile 24 in 2:34:20. I had been running alone for the better part of 10 miles, which was taking a toll on me mentally. The back streets of downtown were desolate with no spectators to provide extra adrenaline. The sun was at full strength and started to really heat things up on my tired body. I was on pace though to obliterate my PR of 2:55:08 set in Houston 2009. I just needed to tough it out for another couple miles. I slowed for a switch back from an underpass to the frontage road, then I had to force myself to pick up the pace again. Another quick couple turns, then down the ramp onto the field of AutoZone Park. I savored the moment as I crossed the finish line with a new PR of 2:48:54.

I received my medal beaming with pride. I played air guitar with an Elvis impersonator then made my way upstairs to retrieve my sweat bag so I could put on my compression gear and some warm clothes. I walked back down to see David finish in 3:12:28, an exceptional time for a first go around. He'll certainly see faster times as we press on to finish a marathon in each state. Marcia and Jeanie found us back upstairs by the sweat bag tent and congratulated us both on an amazing race. Back home, silly Morgan sent David and me cheer texts while we were racing. They were all tracking us from the updates on the website the entire way and reported that I finished 8th overall and 1st in my age group. As usual I called my biggest cheerleader, my mom, to let her be the first to know about my marathon success. David and I then retreated to the food tents and indulged with pizza, beer and donuts.

Baby Abigail felt the urge to compete against her uncle this day as well. Marie reported from Israel that she turned from her back to her belly for the first time and also laughed for the first time. I rocked, she rolled and we both laughed, that's a great day. The good times continued. After David and I rested in the afternoon, Marcia took us out to eat at Humdingers with his sweet grandmother. We rested again before going out to Beale Street with his cousin, Mary.

Apparently in Memphis you can buy booze off the side of the street and parade around in a state of debauchery but you cannot purchase or sell wine in a grocery store to take home with you. All the better! Beale Street is a scaled version of New Orleans' Bourbon Street. We walked up and down the closed street taking in the lights, sounds and atmosphere. We dropped inside BB Kings Blues Club with expectations of listening to some live blues. The band however was singing a different tune, which was happier and more upbeat, more fitting for the way David and I were feeling after our marathon. Our next stop was at O'Sullivan's British Pub with dueling pianos and goats that drank liquor from paint buckets. Then it was on to Blues City Cafe to chow down on some good Memphis BBQ ribs. Like a full marathon champ, I picked the bones clean from the full rack I ordered. We drove back capping an exciting day with a fun time, happy bellies and singing a different tune from Blues City, USA.

Joseph Schwieterman

Bib: #2857, Race: Marathon

Point	Time	Time of Day	Pace
START	00:00:00	8:01:32 am	--
5K	00:20:52	8:22:24 am	06:43
10K	00:41:10	8:42:42 am	06:33
10M	01:05:41	9:07:12 am	06:29
HALF	01:25:39	9:27:11 am	06:27
30K	02:01:46	10:03:18 am	06:32
24M	02:34:20	10:35:51 am	06:05
FINISH	02:48:54	10:50:26 am	06:35
Avg. Pace			06:27

William Lanier

Bib: #1821, Race: Marathon

Point	Time	Time of Day	Pace
START	00:00:00	8:03:32 am	--
5K	00:22:22	8:25:54 am	07:12
10K	00:44:44	8:48:16 am	07:12
10M	01:11:59	9:15:31 am	07:12
HALF	01:34:04	9:37:36 am	07:08
30K	02:15:02	10:18:34 am	07:24
24M	02:54:18	10:57:49 am	07:20
FINISH	03:12:28	11:16:00 am	08:12
Avg. Pace			07:21



Top Men - FULL

Select a Category



Place	Bib	Name	Point	Time	Leader Diff	Pace	Est. Next
1	6	Jason Mccullough	5K	00:17:56.35	---	05:47	10K @ 8:36 am
2	8	Brian Shelton	5K	00:17:56.77	+00:00.42	05:47	10K @ 8:36 am
3	3026	Nathan Sparks	5K	00:19:12.47	+01:16.12	06:11	10K @ 8:38 am
4	13	Scott Mcneil	5K	00:19:16.09	+01:19.74	06:13	10K @ 8:39 am
5	12	Christopher Gre...	5K	00:19:18.67	+01:22.32	06:13	10K @ 8:39 am
6	11	Keith Browning	5K	00:19:18.75	+01:22.40	06:13	10K @ 8:39 am
7	1642	Daniel Jess	5K	00:19:19.07	+01:22.72	06:14	10K @ 8:39 am
8	1465	Clay Hickman	5K	00:19:27.55	+01:31.20	06:16	10K @ 8:39 am
9	2945	Chad Silker	5K	00:19:48.60	+01:52.25	06:23	10K @ 8:40 am
10	3603	Eric Butze	5K	00:19:57.96	+02:01.61	06:26	10K @ 8:40 am
11	2104	Roger Mcmillan Iii	5K	00:20:13.01	+02:16.66	06:31	10K @ 8:40 am
12	2347	Tony Nikodym	5K	00:20:14.58	+02:18.23	06:31	10K @ 8:40 am



Place	Bib	Name	Point	Time	Leader Diff	Pace	Est. Next
1	6	Jason Mccullough	10K	00:35:33.69	---	05:41	10M @ 8:57 am
2	8	Brian Shelton	10K	00:35:44.73	+00:11.04	05:44	10M @ 8:57 am
3	13	Scott Mcneil	10K	00:38:25.49	+02:51.80	06:10	10M @ 9:02 am
4	1642	Daniel Jess	10K	00:38:27.96	+02:54.27	06:10	10M @ 9:02 am
5	11	Keith Browning	10K	00:38:28.14	+02:54.45	06:10	10M @ 9:02 am
6	12	Christopher Gre...	10K	00:38:36.12	+03:02.43	06:13	10M @ 9:02 am
7	1465	Clay Hickman	10K	00:38:47.03	+03:13.34	06:14	10M @ 9:02 am
8	3603	Eric Butze	10K	00:39:25.72	+03:52.03	06:16	10M @ 9:03 am
9	2347	Tony Nikodym	10K	00:39:42.94	+04:09.25	06:17	10M @ 9:03 am
10	3026	Nathan Sparks	10K	00:39:45.83	+04:12.14	06:37	10M @ 9:05 am
11	2945	Chad Silker	10K	00:39:59.34	+04:25.65	06:30	10M @ 9:05 am
12	2940	Brian Sieczkowski	10K	00:40:15.96	+04:42.27	06:24	10M @ 9:04 am



Top Men - FULL

Select a Category



Place	Bib	Name	Point	Time	Leader Diff	Pace	Est. Next
1	6	Jason Mccullough	10M	00:57:17.48	---	05:45	HALF @ 9:15 am
2	8	Brian Shelton	10M	00:57:44.15	+00:26.67	05:49	HALF @ 9:16 am
3	13	Scott Mcneil	10M	01:01:36.23	+04:18.75	06:08	HALF @ 9:21 am
4	1642	Daniel Jess	10M	01:01:55.67	+04:38.19	06:12	HALF @ 9:21 am
5	11	Keith Browning	10M	01:02:10.29	+04:52.81	06:16	HALF @ 9:22 am
6	1465	Clay Hickman	10M	01:02:44.64	+05:27.16	06:20	HALF @ 9:22 am
7	3603	Eric Butze	10M	01:03:38.83	+06:21.35	06:24	HALF @ 9:23 am
8	2347	Tony Nikodym	10M	01:04:00.56	+06:43.08	06:25	HALF @ 9:24 am
9	2945	Chad Silker	10M	01:04:04.05	+06:46.57	06:22	HALF @ 9:24 am
10	2940	Brian Sieczkowski	10M	01:04:56.41	+07:38.93	06:32	HALF @ 9:25 am
11	12	Christopher Gre...	10M	01:05:33.80	+08:16.32	07:08	HALF @ 9:28 am
12	2104	Roger Mcmillan Iii	10M	01:05:56.07	+08:38.59	06:43	HALF @ 9:27 am



Place	Bib	Name	Point	Time	Leader Diff	Pace	Est. Next
1	6	Jason Mccullough	HALF	01:15:02.87	---	05:44	30K @ 9:47 am
2	8	Brian Shelton	HALF	01:15:38.16	+00:35.29	05:47	30K @ 9:48 am
3	13	Scott Mcneil	HALF	01:20:24.42	+05:21.55	06:04	30K @ 9:54 am
4	1642	Daniel Jess	HALF	01:20:49.28	+05:46.41	06:06	30K @ 9:55 am
5	11	Keith Browning	HALF	01:21:38.09	+06:35.22	06:17	30K @ 9:56 am
6	3603	Eric Butze	HALF	01:23:06.82	+08:03.95	06:17	30K @ 9:58 am
7	2347	Tony Nikodym	HALF	01:23:34.78	+08:31.91	06:19	30K @ 9:59 am
8	1465	Clay Hickman	HALF	01:23:40.10	+08:37.23	06:45	30K @ 10:01 am
9	2945	Chad Silker	HALF	01:23:43.27	+08:40.40	06:21	30K @ 9:59 am
10	2940	Brian Sieczkowski	HALF	01:24:52.17	+09:49.30	06:26	30K @ 10:00 am
11	2828	Mike Schaefer	HALF	01:26:34.11	+11:31.24	06:31	30K @ 10:03 am
12	2857	Joseph Schwiete...	HALF	01:26:41.57	+11:38.70	06:27	30K @ 10:02 am



Place	Bib	Name	Point	Time	Leader Diff	Pace	Est. Next
1	6	Jason Mccullough	30K	01:48:19.58	---	06:01	24M @ 10:20 am
2	8	Brian Shelton	30K	01:50:27.00	+02:07.42	06:17	24M @ 10:24 am
3	13	Scott Mcneil	30K	01:54:59.08	+06:39.50	06:15	24M @ 10:28 am
4	1642	Daniel Jess	30K	01:56:32.83	+08:13.25	06:27	24M @ 10:31 am
5	11	Keith Browning	30K	01:58:25.18	+10:05.60	06:39	24M @ 10:34 am
6	3603	Eric Butze	30K	01:59:42.53	+11:22.95	06:37	24M @ 10:35 am
7	1465	Clay Hickman	30K	01:59:51.82	+11:32.24	06:32	24M @ 10:35 am
8	2945	Chad Silker	30K	01:59:52.16	+11:32.58	06:32	24M @ 10:35 am
9	2347	Tony Nikodym	30K	02:01:32.52	+13:12.94	06:52	24M @ 10:38 am
10	2940	Brian Sieczkowski	30K	02:02:24.33	+14:04.75	06:47	24M @ 10:39 am
11	2857	Joseph Schwiete...	30K	02:02:48.50	+14:28.92	06:32	24M @ 10:38 am
12	1249	Spencer Gray	30K	02:04:27.56	+16:07.98	06:41	24M @ 10:40 am



Place	Bib	Name	Point	Time	Leader Diff	Pace	Est. Next
1	8	Brian Shelton	24M	02:23:36.22	---	06:12	FINISH @ 10:37 am
2	6	Jason Mccullough	24M	02:25:49.73	+02:13.51	07:00	FINISH @ 10:41 am
3	13	Scott Mcneil	24M	02:26:07.46	+02:31.24	05:49	FINISH @ 10:39 am
4	1642	Daniel Jess	24M	02:31:58.97	+08:22.75	06:37	FINISH @ 10:47 am
5	11	Keith Browning	24M	02:32:59.21	+09:22.99	06:28	FINISH @ 10:47 am
6	3603	Eric Butze	24M	02:33:39.97	+10:03.75	06:21	FINISH @ 10:48 am
7	2945	Chad Silker	24M	02:33:54.72	+10:18.50	06:22	FINISH @ 10:48 am
8	1465	Clay Hickman	24M	02:34:09.70	+10:33.48	06:25	FINISH @ 10:48 am
9	2857	Joseph Schwiete...	24M	02:35:21.96	+11:45.74	06:05	FINISH @ 10:49 am
10	2347	Tony Nikodym	24M	02:37:14.72	+13:38.50	06:40	FINISH @ 10:52 am
11	2940	Brian Sieczkowski	24M	02:39:27.45	+15:51.23	06:55	FINISH @ 10:55 am
12	1249	Spencer Gray	24M	02:40:07.21	+16:30.99	06:40	FINISH @ 10:55 am