

All American City 10K – Edinburg, TX
Feb. 5, 2011

We drove the 2.5 hours from Corpus to Edinburg Friday afternoon. The drive is easy, just not very scenic, unless you are into bob wire fencing and counting Border Patrol vehicles. Our hotel, the Echo Hotel was 1 block from the start of the race and located right on the highway (Bus 281), which we found fairly easily.

David Chavana the race director, met us at registration at the Echo Hotel with our t-shirts, bib numbers, chips and a ticket for dinner. Dinner was good with a choice of Mexican, Fish or Chicken Pasta. We invited Andrew Middleton (ran 2nd top American Male: 5:03 pace) to eat with us. We had nice dinner conversation which of course centered around, what else, running and retelling of high school and college races.

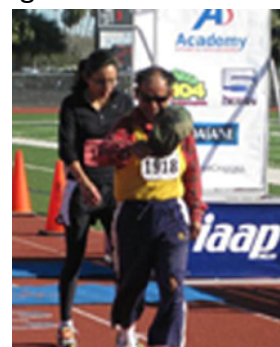


David invites lots of elite runners to this race and pays well for the top finishers: \$2000, \$1500 and \$1000 respectively for each of the top 3 Male and Female elites. This attracts a fast field of runners that include professional Kenyans, Mexican National and American runners. (which includes our own David Rodriguez: who ran 3rd Top USA male.)

David put John and I in the elite corral (green bib numbers). Which, for John made lots of since, for me; I knew I was in over my head. I stayed as far back as I could in the corral and tried to be as inconspicuous as possible. My hope was just not to get run over at the gun by the 1200 or so anxious runners lined up behind me.

The weather was a perfect 30 degrees and 5 mph winds at the start. I over dressed and had to run the last 2.5 miles with gloves and my vest in my hands. The course was new for this year (I learned it was the original course from years ago). We ran through downtown Edinburg via Bus 281 (Closner Blvd) and looped back via the town square and then back for the finish line inside Bobcat Stadium. The first loop-back at the half mile mark allowed us to see the elite runners in action. The last 2.5 mile stretch was against the wind which had picked up a bit after the start. The finish was at the 60 yard line in the stadium with the big screen on the scoreboard to capture each finish. The results were displayed on the 32" flat screen monitor at the finish, so within minutes runners could check their official finish times as it scrolled through the results.

I am a people watcher and races are a great place to do that. As I was covering in the back of my corral at the start, I notice there were runners dressed in everything from singlets and shorts to one older gentlemen dressed in a flannel shirt and holey wind pants. This guy was at least in his 60's and edging his way up to the green corral. He wore a white bib number which put him in the last corral. The corral directors kept trying to get him to move back to his corral. He just looked at them like he didn't understand and moved sideways. She tried speaking to him in Spanish and the blank look on his face



The guy in the flannel shirt at the finish

never changed. I suspected he was just playing dumb. He knew where he should be. (He finished 5 minutes ahead of me: Grand Master winner). I learned long ago to never judge a book by it's cover and a runner by their attire.

The 2 mile run walk started at 11:00 AM. The line of runners and walkers was 2 lanes wide and solid for the entire 2 miles. Adults, kids, strollers and dogs made up the solid mass of movement down the street. This race is well supported by the Edinburg community. The schools encourage their students and teachers to participate. Awards are given to the schools with the most registered. One elementary won first place for having 550 people registered from their school. There were groups from local businesses walking together with matching T-shirts indicating who they were affiliated with. This is a great community event and the \$10 entry fee is hard to beat. I have run this race 3 times and I have never been disappointed. It's well organized and well attended with about 1300 10K participants and over 2000 run /walkers in the 2 mile.

John and I both won overall Senior Masters: John 38:49.7 and Me 49:30.1



John at Finish: First Male Senior Master



John, David Chavana and Me