

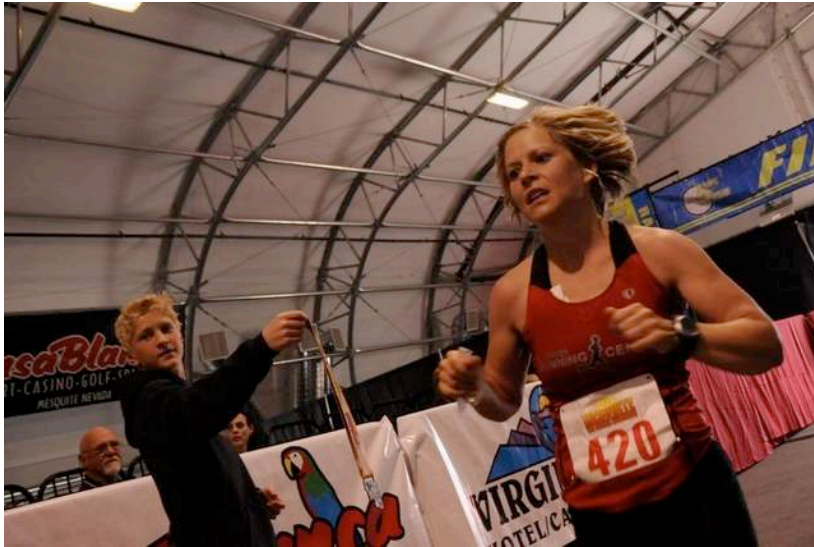


Ohio physician wins Mesquite Marathon

10:00 PM, Nov. 24, 2011 | [Comments](#)

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St. George, Utah runner Marcie Jacobsen won the women's portion of the Mesquite Marathon Saturday with a time of 3:03.23. / Submitted photo



MESQUITE - The third annual Mesquite Tri-State Marathon on Saturday had everything ranging from a challenging layout to enough stories of inspiration to fill a book.

The third annual spectacular drew more than 400 competitors of all ages from 40 states, from young kids to a pair of women in their 70s and 80s.

Sporting a revised route for the last few miles, along with a great timing system operated by the team of Planet Ultra in St. George, the event generated endless positive comments.

The overall winner of the 26.2-mile marathon, which started in the open spaces of Utah on Highway 91, was 39 year-old Columbus, Ohio, physician Dave Giammar, who had a time of two hours, 40.56 minutes.

"It was beautiful here," Giammar said. "This was run very well."

An eight-year veteran of marathons who runs 30-40 miles a week, Giammar headed south down the hill on Highway 91, proceeded under I-15 and mastered a long stretch of canyons and hilly roads before completing his impressive performance inside the CasaBlanca Event Center.

St. George resident Marcie Jacobsen won the women's marathon with a time of 3:03.23.

"I'm just addicted to running," said Jacobsen, the mother of a 2-year-old son. "I love having a goal."

Jacobson echoed the comments of nearly everyone who said marathon running is simply good for all involved both physically and mentally. Add in picturesque weather conditions and the end result was a win-win for all involved.

Jacobson said the sport is an ideal way to clear her mind.

"I have a million things going through my mind when I'm running," she said. "This is a great way to clear your mind."

Another fascinating story in the marathon was the multi-generational team of Mesquite resident Don Sand, 63; his son, David, 40; and his grandson Henry, 17.

The elder Sand, who now weighs 155 pounds, rebounded from a battle with prostate surgery while losing about 80 pounds. His son and grandson, who live in Corona, Calif., also combined to lose a total of 130 pounds.

"I just got tired of not feeling well," said Sand, "so I started running a year ago. We all needed to lose weight and running has been the best thing any of us could do."

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The field also included two women both who could run circles around many people half their ages - Carolyn Hathaway, 79, of Indianapolis, Ind., in the half marathon; and Dorothy Neary, 86, of Dillon, Colo., who ran the 5K.

"Last year was my first marathon," said Neary. "This keeps me healthy."

Then there was colorful Jim Madonna, 73, who drove 3,500 miles to Mesquite from Fairbanks, Alaska, to compete in the half marathon.

"When I retired, I had a choice to either go fishing or start running," Madonna said.

Cyndie Merten made the trek to Mesquite from Corvallis, Ore.

"I'm part of the Marathon Maniacs Club," said Merten, a 55 year-old software engineer. "I finished my 52nd marathon in a year last week in Bothell, Wash., so that made me a Titanium Marathon Maniac."

Merten had a time of about 5 hours, 40 minutes in the 50-55 female marathon portion of the event. She then concentrated on the Valley of Fire Marathon a day later.

"Fifty-two miles is no big deal to me," she said. "Next weekend in Seattle, we are having four marathons in four days. "Together they call this the Quadzilla and I'm ready for it. Just doing two of them this weekend is no big deal."

Full results of the event can be found by visiting www.racedaytiming.com.

Next up on the Mesquite Gaming schedule is the first annual High Desert Robinson Regional & Mojave Desert Regional chili cook-offs at the CasaBlanca today and Saturday. Log onto www.casablancaresort.com for more information.

