

Wednesday, August 13, 2008

Student keeps blog in preparation for Brooksie Way

Oct. 5, 2008

Great day for a race! Started off chilly, but once the sun was out, it was perfect. The crowds were encouraging and the course was nicely laid out. My loving wife brought our puggle along and both cheered me along at the start and finish of the race. I even had some friends along the way, especially at mile 10, which helped me kick-it-in-gear to finish the last 3.1 miles.

Overall, I am well pleased with my performance. My time was 1:18:19 with an overall finish of 10th place, 1st in my age group of 20-24. My time would have been 2 seconds faster except I stopped just shy of the finish due to some confusion on where the finish line was at. But, I got my legs back in gear to finish strong. The course was challenging - hills were everywhere! It was mentally difficult because I had to plan appropriately on altering my pace during uphill and downhill in order to limit my fatigue. But I loved the downhill finish - my mind was so exhausted I could have sworn I was flying.

I want to thank OU News for organizing this blog. Congratulations to everyone that completed the race - either the 5K or half-marathon, running, walking or wheeling. It nice to know there are other crazy runners out there with me.

Sept. 28, 2008

One week to go!! In the early stages of training, it seems like race day is very far off and I have lots of time to train. But as the day closes in, now it seems I wish I had more time to train. All I can do now is run the race I have trained for and do my best to finish strong. I ran a 10 mile on the 27th; a tempo-race pace and did it in 1 hour and 42 seconds - just about 6 minute/mile. I'm going to try for that pace for the whole half-marathon...we'll see...

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Sept. 21, 2008

This morning, I completed my longest run of my training for the Brooksie: 14 miles. Felt great, especially after having two of my favorite GU's at miles 5 and 10: vanilla bean. So, now I will focus on some good quality runs this week before tapering off next week. I will also mention another great run I had last week. We had all that rain and I always loved a good rain-run. The only problem is, the shoes and socks get soaked and it feels like I'm running with bricks; I guess it's a good strengthening tool. I hope everyone else's training is going strong. I have a few friends in the PT program talking about running the 5k - I'll keep bugging them to join.

Sept. 7, 2008

Now that school is underway, I've noticed my schedule is being refined to accommodate class, study, work and training time without going too crazy. After just a few days into the semester, it's either I a.) run early at 6 a.m., b.) run during lunch hour, c.) run right after classes at late afternoon d.) or run at night. The only one that is ranked last is the night run since I need that time to study and relax. So, I mainly juggle selections a through b, depending on the day. Though I will say that the lunch hour run is quite challenging since it is the most time constraining: what can I run within one hour and still have time to take a shower and get some food in before class.... If you see a crazy runner sprinting around campus during lunch hour, you know it's me. Please join me if you like. We only have four more weeks to train!

Sept. 2, 2008

According to the countdown timer on the Brooksie Way Web site, I have 32 days, 14 hours and 8 minutes, at this very moment, before the gun will go off and the race begins....I can feel the adrenaline rushing already! No matter how well I can run right now, when race day comes around, it's the adrenaline rush that makes me go just a little faster than what I normally anticipated. What is my race time? Well, let's just say I want to finish strong but depleted of every ounce of energy, knowing that I gave it my all. For me, something under 1 hour 20 minutes would be great. But, time is not the focus; just finishing the race strong and proud is how I roll!

Aug. 23, 2008

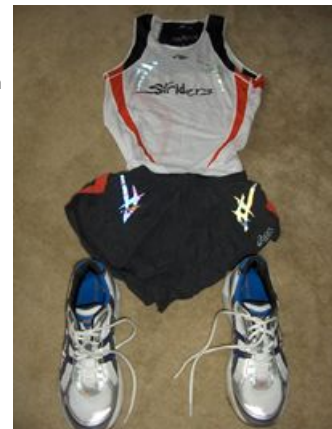
I did 11 miles this morning but felt slightly sluggish. It was a muggy morning and my body just couldn't wake-up. But, I tried a new route and liked the change of scenery. Yet, my training is still going strong. With school beginning soon, I will have to alter my training days to accommodate the hectic class schedule once again. But, I find that the more scheduled my day is, the more easier it is to keep my training schedule on task. With just over a month of training left, this is a critical time to get good, quality runs in and avoid injury at all costs.

Aug. 21, 2008

Do you know of the hills behind the Rec Center? Well, I finally got myself and a buddy of mine to run up and down those hills; they are a lot more steeper than expected! I would sprint up the hill, jog back down and then another one minute jog at the base before repeating. I did this ten times and then noticed some steps on the other end of the hill and decided to run those five times up and down. My legs felt like bricks at the end, but I was happy with the quality of the run. One thing I always do for my interval/speed days is to not stop in between intervals but rather do a slow jog or at least a walk to let my body recover before the next one. I figured if I never get to stop in a race, why should I stop my body during a training run. Maybe I'm crazy or maybe not. Just keep the legs moving!



Getting pumped up for the start of the race.



My race shoes and uniform. I just bought my shoes from Runnin' Gear two weeks ago - trying to break them in before race day.



Lehr's shoes are worn, but comfortable.

Aug. 18, 2008

I just spent a weekend up north at my family cabin. I was very excited since I love the morning runs up there: waking up at sunrise, lacing up the shoes on the porch overlooking the lake, cutting through the crisp-morning air and breathing in the clean, filtered air from the vast forest that surrounds me. I find it amazing how much cleaner my lungs feel after a good run up north. I did about 8 miles that morning, a little less than what I originally planned, but very relaxing. Yet, later that day we went to the sand dunes and I figured that counted for my catching up on those missed miles. Pictured is my dog, Balki (a puggle - half beagle and half pug), who enjoys the runs down the dunes, but not the trip back up!

July 29, 2008

Hello and welcome to my first blog during my training for the Brooksie Way Half Marathon. First off, I love running. If people know me, they know that I run. I run for fun; I run for fitness, I run to compete; I run to explore the area during vacation; I run to drop off a rented DVD. It's me; it's my addiction. I know I'm not the best or any superstar runner, but I know I can hold my own. I've run in 5Ks up to marathons, even two triathlons. Some great, some not so great. Eventually, I can fore see ultra-marathons in the future, but as of now, I am content with races under 26.2 miles. I am glad for the talent God has given me and I don't like to let it go to waste. So, I run to the best I can do and that's all I can expect from myself.

As for my affiliation with OU and participating in the "Preparing for the Brooksie Way" blog, I am a current graduate student of OU, working on attaining my Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) degree, class of 2010. I just finished my first year of the program and currently on a short break, getting ready to start up another year during this fall semester. As for my undergraduate work, it was at Grand Valley State University, where I received a B.S. in Exercise Science. As you can probably guess, the biomechanics, anatomy and physiology of the human body are quite intriguing to me, especially as it relates to running.

My "official" training for the half marathon started off kind of rough this July, since I somehow caught a cold-bug during the first week of my training (I have no idea how one can get a cold in the middle of summer, but I did). Needless to say, I am on track, progressively adding miles, increasing my tempo runs, etc. I just ran a nice and easy 10 miler this past Sunday and felt great. During the week, I have no set schedule for training. I always go by how my body is feeling and decide how hard or easy I need to go that day.

I'm excited for the Brooksie Way and glad it is taking place (starting and finishing) on Oakland's campus. It should be a really beautiful course, though I did hear there will be some "fun" hills. I really hope other fellow Oakland students/faculty are participating in this event. Whether you can run, jog or walk either the half marathon or 5K, I encourage anyone to sign-up. I like to know that I am not the only one in the world that is a "crazy runner" who thinks it is fun to run. Please join the "crazy runner" club.



Lehr and his dog, Balki, run up a sand dune.



Aaron Lehr

SUMMARY

Aaron Lehr began running in elementary school. To his classmates, he was known as "The Flash." Throughout elementary, middle and high school, Lehr continued to run for sport. Now, a graduate student in the Doctor of Physical Therapy program, he's running for himself and his next big event will be the Brooksie Way half marathon that will start at finish at OU's Meadow Brook Hall. Lehr will document his training through a blog.

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