

The 5K that Wasn't

The southern Nevada version of the *Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure* is always a 5K, at least it has been since it was started here in southern Nevada 19 years ago. This year? It was more like a mystery run. It turned out to be closer to 6K.

Here was the explanation that was posted on *Facebook*, by the Executive Director (Is that a fancy term for the RD?), none other than our own President, Tim Kelly.

"The course we intended to run was not the course the barricade company set up. They're not to be faulted, though. They were told by the permitting authorities to draw a barricade plan that conflated the course we ran in 2010-2012 with the course we ran last year (which was the course we expected to run again this year). The result was a hybrid route that was WAY too long and a complete surprise to those of us volunteering for the Race for the Cure. The bottom line is that someone had a brain cramp, and that someone is not with Komen, the barricade company or the Track Club. ARGH!"

For most of the participants in this annual charity event, it doesn't matter. They're just out for a recreational jog or walk on a nice spring day in early May. In fact, of the 501 finishers in the "timed run" only a handful were really running for time. Only 25 men were under 25 minutes when they crossed the finish line and only 11 women broke 30. But for those "runners" (versus joggers), the length of the course does matter. As one who has run a few races—from the 440 (that's what we used to call it) to the marathon—and watched many more, pace is what it's all about. You plan your race based on the total distance. This was like running 5000 meters on the track, 12 ½ laps. Except this time you get to the finish line and find out you have two more laps to run. "ARGH!" is right.

And when I saw the results from this race and heard complaints about the... let's call it "discrepancy" with the course, I immediately thought of Andrew Duncan. He finished second, again?

Let me take you back to this year's *Fat Boy 5K*. Leading throughout the race, Andrew and high school stud, Freddy Amon, are starting their final push for the finish line. And Andrew times it perfectly. He overtakes the Clark senior at what he thinks is the finish line... where the cones are, right?



Andrew Duncan and Freddy Amon at finish of Fat Boy 5K

Wrong, the finish line is actually where the *clock* is and Andrew is overtaken. He finishes second.

Now at this year's Komen race he's "longed" again, this time losing to Dominic Henriques by four seconds. It has to bite. I'm sure Andrew took it in stride, but still....

Ok, enough on that. I don't want to take anything away from Dominic. He probably would have bested Andrew on an "honest" course as well. It doesn't hurt that Dominic is 19 years younger than Andrew (27 versus 46). But I did find it ironic that in the three Series race that Andrew has run this year, twice he has lost by narrow margins under unusual circumstances. (Note: Andrew won the Club Championship 10K in January by a healthy margin of 5.4 seconds. Dominic didn't enter.)

It was a good day for the Henriques! Dominic won and Amanda took second, bested only by Christina Vergara Aleshire, who ran an excellent race, beating all but the top six men in a time of 21:06. Amanda finished 1:20 back in 22:26, ninth overall in the race. I guess for Christina and Amanda, who both ran the 6K distance in college cross country, the extra 1K was no big deal.

And it was a good day for Las Vegas Track Club members in total. Five of the top eight male finishers are LVTC members. In addition to Dominic and Andrew, Jake Mazone was sixth (21:06); Gamini Sugathadasa finished seventh (21:21); and Eric Hosafros was eighth (22:27), just behind Amanda. Among the women, five of the top-ten were LVTC members. After Amanda, Christina Jimenez was third (25:01); Toshie Bertsch was fifth (25:52); right behind her, Erin Tasko was sixth (26:27); and Amy Leonard finished tenth (29:08), the last female runner under 30. Two of our youth runners did well also. Both Evan Alejandro and Ojesa Kwong won their age group and earned 15 Series points for their efforts.

But, for me, this year's *Race for the Cure* will always be the 5K that wasn't. Meanwhile, hang in there, Andrew. There's always the *STS 3200*. I guarantee you won't have to run an extra lap and there won't be any confusion as to the finish line.

Coach Phil