

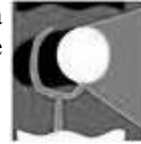
Sheila Natho not only has a passion for running, but also for SCUBA diving and golf

Sheila Natho of Dallas has been consistently one of the top female runners at Dallas-Fort Worth races, and is making her mark as a masters runner. She logs from 50 to 60 miles a week and sometimes will enter races under her alias Sparkle Plenty when she's doing her speed work for that week. Sheila also is an avid SCUBA diver and now has developed a passion for golf. Actually, those two sports could be compatible...after hitting a golf ball into the water, dive in and retrieve it. Just make room in the golf bag for the extra gear.

By Sheila Natho



I started running in 1989 although I had dabbled with running a tad in high school at Lake Highlands in Dallas because the basketball coach was also the cross country coach.



*Runner
in
the Spotlight*

I ran 2-3 meets my junior year in HS, but did not run in District or the big meets since the coach opted to use folks from the swim team who were faster. I did not think this was fair so I didn't continue running after that. The coach kind of broke my heart when he said I would not be running District. So, I gave it up, just went off to college at Stephen F. Austin State and partied!

Once I graduated and got my CPA certification, I had all this time on my hands so I started to run again in 1989. My first marathon was the Dallas White Rock Marathon in 1989. I wanted to qualify for Boston but went out too fast and blew up and ran 3:56. I came back the next year (1990) and ran 3:35, so I got to Boston in 1991 and ran 3:26 (if there had been chip timing back then, it would have been 3:24).

I lowered my marathon PR to 3:16 at DWRM in 1991 but it kind of stuck there. I decided marathons were not my distance and quit doing them. I think 10K and half marathons are my best distances. My 2002 CCCD Half (now the DRC Half) of 1:25:56 is my PR. I was 36. But, I think my 1:26:28 at Houston in 2009 was really my best half if you were to age grade it since I was 43 at the time. All my other PRs were during 2002-2003 when I was 36/37. My 5K PR is 18:37 at the Autumn Equinox in 2002, 38:28 in the 10K at Dino Dash in 2003. I was on fire in 2002 and 2003. I had stepped my mileage up then. Before that, I only ran 40 miles a week. I stepped it up to 50-60, then and got those results.

I still manage about low 50 miles per week on average. When I am doing base in the summer, I try and hit 60. I can't seem to get past 60; everything starts hurting and I break.

I have never had any formal coaching. I just put on my iPod and go out and run. I travel a lot for work so do most training by myself. I hate the track and do not do speed work. My speed work is at races, which I will do racing under the name Sparkle Plenty or I will just run bandit and drop out of the race. Folks give me lots of grief about this, but this is what works for me.

Besides running, I am an avid scuba diver with over 650 logged dives. I have traveled the world to scuba dive....Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, Micronesia, Australia, Fiji, Solomon Islands as well as numerous trips to the Caribbean. My new passion is golf. I took it up a year and half ago and have broken 90 several times. My goal this summer is to get under 80. This is going to be a tall order, but I think I can get at least close !!