

Inspired by a friend, Gary Anderson took on the challenges of running long distances after bouncing back from early surgery

By Gary Anderson



I started running after being inspired by my neighbor Dwayne Hargrove, who was training for a marathon. After seeing him finish the Cowtown Marathon in 2002, I was ready to do a marathon, but not before a minor setback. The week after Cowtown, I got the MRI results from a knee injury I sustained playing soccer. My ACL was completely torn along with a tear in my meniscus. I had surgery to replace my ACL and repair the meniscus at the end of March 2002. I was able to start running in May 2002 as part of my physical therapy and I gradually began building mileage, a quarter mile at a time.



*Runner
in
the Spotlight*

My first “race” was a half marathon in November 2002, followed by my first marathon in February 2003. I was completely hooked on running after completing that first marathon. I started running in the Metroplex events at every distance from 5K to 50K. The marathon is my favorite race distance. I’ve had the opportunity to run marathons all over the country, including four times at the Boston Marathon. Boston is my favorite with Cowtown running a close second (sorry Heidi). You get to meet so many people at running events no matter what size. The running community is such a remarkable group of people with so many interesting stories.

A couple of years ago, Jim and James Newsom of Fort Worth Running Company asked if I would be one of their marathon coaches. I was honored and humbled to be asked to take on such a task. I absolutely love coaching runners and hope I inspire them to enjoy running as much as I do. Long runs, tempo runs and track work, all that hard work people put in and the successes they have are incredible to see. In the fall of 2011, I met Eve Pearson of Nutriworks CNC who said she could make me a faster marathoner by changing my nutrition. My first thought was “well you’re full of it.” Being an engineer, I was a bit skeptical, but I accepted her challenge. I need to give her credit for my race times over the past year or so, especially in longer races. The strength and energy that I have during races has been amazing. She really does know her stuff about nutrition.

The engineer in me keeps a detailed running log with times, distances and heart rate for every type of runs during training and racing. A couple weeks ago, I rolled over 25,000 total miles in my running log as well as completing my 57th marathon. I’m looking forward to the next 25,000 miles and all the new friends along the way. My personal records: 5K -- 17:36, 10K -- 37:26, 15K -- 57:04, Half -- 1:20:51, Marathon -- 2:49:25