

**David Williams from Houston**  
**Tyler Rose Marathon 10-10**

We had a fun weekend in Tyler. On Saturday morning we coached our group except those of us running the marathon the next day didn't run, just drove around giving support. Then I left about 10:30am Sat and drove up to Tyler, with a stop for lunch in Crocket, TX. Old cafe on the square with Tea Party and various candidate signs out from and a state rep handing out road maps inside. It was about a 3:10 drive plus lunch so not too bad. Our group was all staying at a Courtyard by Marriott that was only 4 months old - very pretty, big flat-screen TVs in the rooms, very nice. I saw 8 people from our group before I got to the elevator. The race was small so packet pickup was less than a minute and the "expo" was a table with t-shirts and coffee mugs.

This was the first marathon I have driven to outside of the Houston area (even New Orleans is over a 6 hour drive away), so it was nice to have my own car. I drove a buddy downtown so we could scope out the start and parking (easy), picked up some bubble bath for my head coach (she forgot hers), and then took another friend to a running store to buy socks (she forgot her socks-worse than forgetting bubble bath!). We then had our own pasta dinner for our group in the hotel and the race director came and talked to us. He also does the Big D marathon in Dallas and several halves. This was the inaugural Tyler Rose but he obviously is a professional and everything went well.

Michael Barnes is one of our coaches, a Brit, former Royal Marine special forces, great guy but pretty much a control freak, and 10/10/10 was his 55th birthday. Unbeknownst to him, we had ordered special shirts ordered and wore them to the pasta dinner. Texas and British flags, his name and birthday wishes, and 10-10-10 on the back with one of his sayings "finish with dignity". Then his wife (US federal judge), Hugh (62 and about my size) and Fred (black guy about my age) came into the dinner in blond wigs, makeup, white elbow length gloves and boas, and sang happy birthday to Michael a la Marilyn Monroe. It was too funny. I'll send a pic when i can.

On Sunday morning i parked 1.5 blocks from the start, on the street for free. It was about 59, so cool but didn't even need a trash bag waiting for the start. No portapotty lines! We had a Houston Fit tent set up right by the start/finish with chairs, snacks, water. There were about 250 in the Full and maybe 800 in the Half, but the Half started 30 minutes later so they were not in our way. I started with 9 of my buddies, and we kind of spread out after a while but we still had each other around. We did a big loop out to the airport and back, about 15 miles. We had been told that part was flatter than the part back in town, but we didn't see more than half a mile total that was flat. ALL HILLS! Not as big as MDI but some were pretty long and they just kept coming. It was sunny and getting hot, especially on the 6 mile straightaway on a hiway back into town. Plus did I mentions hills? Then back in town we joined the half marathon course through residential areas - lots of turns, brick streets, and oh yeah HILLS! It got up to about 84 by the time I finished and you know I don't do well in the heat. The latter part through neighborhoods was fairly shady but with some sunny sections, and I think I forgot to mention the hills. I caught back up to Fred at mile 21 after trying to close the last 2 blocks between us for a couple of miles. But then I was tired from the chase and he left me after about a mile. When I got to the finish by friends were cheering and it was pretty nice. I was happy with a 5:54 given the heat and the HILLS! I beat 3 friends that are usually faster than me. In a 20 minute period around my time there were 11 finishers and 7 were from my group. It was so different running with so many friends. Some races there are a lot of 50 staters around but that isn't the same as the people I see every week.

The medal is a rose and they handed us yellow rose bushes at the finish line.



The was a great weekend and well-organized for an inaugural but they should try to take out a few of the hills. As I've said in Houston for hill training we go to a neighborhood with speed bumps. In Tyler they just run around the block; any block will do. Of course, I describe MDI as a few small hills and 14 big mothers. Have fun!

David

I forgot to mention that two of my friends came in 1st and 2nd in their 55-59 female group. Kathleen passed me at mile 22 and Gay finished 2 minutes behind me, but they were the only ones in their age group. We could have had a 1-2-3 sweep but Helen canceled out on the trip at the last minute. These ladies aren't used to the small races we do where Diana can win her age group by finishing, so they were very excited. Of course, being in the more populated male 50-54, I was 16th in mine.

FEMALE AGE GROUP: 55 - 59

Place	Bib#	Name	Age	Half	Pace	Final	Pace
1	287	Kathleen Kuhn	59	2:46:02	12:41	5:49:22	13:20
2	93	Gay Gulledege	55	2:46:03	12:41	5:56:07	13:36

David

Later – after questioning:

Tyler was fun except for all the hills. Little hills, not the big ones at MDI, but still just non-stop. Plus it was about 84 when I finished. But in a 20 minute period from 5:45 to 6:05 there were 11 finishers and 7 of those were from my group (including me). We had an age group winner in the half women over 70 – of course she was also the only one in her group. We had 1-2 in the 55-59 women in the full – also only ones in group. But we had a fast young lady win her age group in the full. Compared to all those races I did by myself (BMD – before Maricar and Diana) where I might see a couple of 50 stater I had met but didn't really know, this was great having my HFit family there.