



The 39th Illsanjo Classic 10 mile, 4 mile Neo classic and 1k Newt Scoot

Putting the 39th edition of the Illsanjo Classic this year reminded me of an episode of *Extreme House Make Overs* of which I've only seen once....Basically we start with three beautiful parks (Howarth, Spring Lake and Annadale) to run in and through the efforts of a few volunteers, some orange cones, pink ribbons and two hundred and eighty happy runners a race is formed!

It was a busy week for me. I work in San Diego four days a week and the past two days I was in Humboldt with the SSU Women's Cross Country team for a track meet. Race morning-- thanks to Day Light Savings time change-- was oh sooo dark at 0700 but Bob Shore was there with the race trailer and the ER tent was already up. Within the hour over the runners showed up ready to race...several had signed up for the event but either forgot to set their clock back or were scared off by the potential showers that make this course down right dangerous!

The Newt Scoot Race

8:45am exactly, twenty mini runners (not you Mel!) took off on the out and back rolling course. This race itself is a classic with every kid who finishes receiving a finishers ribbon and a frozen yogurt from Yogurt Farms across from Santa Rosa High School thanks once again to Todd Phillips. Connor Schott was the first to spank the course in 4:27 followed closely by Orion James (4:33) who used the race as a warm up for the 4 Mile race. Forrest Devine came in third in 4:45. For the girls McKenna Sell just missed breaking five minutes in 5:01 followed by Kallista James (5:17) wearing jeans and Ella O'Toole in 5:20. Both Connor and McKenna got cool Yogurt Farms t-shirts for their efforts.

The 4 mile Race

Numbers were down for this race with only 56 racers this year...probably due to the fact that runners wanted to get their moneys worth and opted for the 10 mile instead. The race actually started ten minutes after the 10 Mile race and as always despite multiple warnings and signage a few 4 milers left in the earlier group (they were promptly fined, penalized and made to wear an orange cone on their heads for the rest of the race! I'm kidding!) The first across the line was Guy Schott who obviously trained with his son as they got the father/son combo winner award for the day. Guy went 24:56, quite impressive for a :48 year old guy! Andy Howard who is actually a couple years older came in second in 25:21 followed by Mini Mel for third place overall in 25:50. The very ripped looking Mel decided not to pursue another championship ring in the 10 mile this year and instead is training for Ultimate Fighting. Again I jest! Third place guy was Nathon Koch in 27:35. It should be noted that Koch actually started the beard fad that is being seen in so many sports today. Second place woman was Val Sell and third was 12 year old Delaney White in 30:53. Orion James, at 8 years old, won the 29 and under male category mostly because, well, all those guys were doing the 10 miler!

The 10 classic race

Michael Zanetti was only 7 seconds from Gerald McCormick's time from last year finishing the 10 miler in 59:55 putting him on the sub one hour list. He was so distraught he went and ran it over again and I never saw him at the awards where he missed claiming his first place of a trip to Hawaii so I took it. Actually he had to go to work at Fleet Feet. John Staroba minus his kid in a stroller which has become his trademark came in second in 1:02:52 and Sid Andreis was third in 1:04:33. The rain held out for the entire race which was fortunate as the downhill section of the course can be a real doozy. Cathy Dubay was the first female finisher in 1:10:46 followed by Carrie Joseph (1:12:24) and Karen Teuscher in 1:14:40. There were several pre teen runners who did the 10 miler including Daniel Pride (11) in 1:18:15 and Alejandro Escutio (12) in 1:21:05 prompting me to reconsider my kid Orion's request to do the 10 miler next year!

By 11:30 most if all the runners were accounted for and awards were handed out courtesy of Heart and Soul and Fleet Feet. Rodney King....I mean Rodney Strong wine was also doled out to winners and lucky raffle ticket holders.

The Empire Runner

Again special thanks to you--the runners--who came out to do the race and the volunteers to include SSU Cross Country who set up, closed down and monitored the race along with assistant coach Chandra Farnham. To Bob Shore who is awesome at what he always does. To Doug and Tori at the finish line and to those Empire runners who stepped into help monitor and make the race work. To Danae Hawkey at Starbucks who gave us 5 gallons of coffee of which I drank myself and Todd at Yogurt Farms. Lastly to my wife Tania who shopped for bagles and oranges, funneled my three kids to the race on time and spent the night inputting names and times on Excel. Thanks All!

PS Next year Illsanjo will have something in common with Southwest Airlines and Starbucks.....yep the 40th! Start training now!

Mark James

SSU XC...etc!