

In Pursuit of Running the 50 States and D.C.!

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#46

Cox Sports Providence Marathon

Providence, RI

Sunday, May 3, 2009

8:00 AM



Rhode Island, The Ocean State, is the smallest U.S. state by area. It was the first of the 13 original colonies to declare independence from the British rule. Providence is the capital and the most populous city. I flew into Providence on Friday afternoon and stayed in the host hotel, Westin, which provided late check out on Sunday. Brown University, founded in 1764, was fairly close to Westin and I visited the campus. The packet pick-up/expo was in the hotel on Saturday and before the race on Sunday. The technical short-sleeved T-shirt each runner received was nice.

The Providence Marathon was born in 2008. Race morning temperature ranged from low 50s to mid 60s. It was mainly overcast and wind was not a factor. The start and finish lines were outside Westin. The out-and back/looped course was through Providence, East Providence, Seekonk, and Barrington. It was fairly scenic and included several hilly sections which deserved plenty of respect. We ran the first eight miles with half marathoners. There was a large number of volunteers throughout the course. Traffic control was very good. There were enough water/sports drink stations which could have been organized better, as it was hard to know who was handing out water or sports drink. There were also sports gels in a few locations. There was hardly any crowd support. Finisher's medallion was nice and there were plenty of refreshments at the finish which included pizza and beer. I saw several selfish runners and non-runners taking boxes of pizza and I began to wonder if any would be left for late finishers. There was a band entertaining the finishers. In short, it was a well organized running event.

There were 732 marathon finishers in the average time of 4:11:40. The winning times were 2:35:19 (overall male), 2:35:46 (masters male), 2:56:09 (overall female), and 3:06:06 (masters female). There were 1842 half marathon finishers and the winning

times were 1:15:09 (overall male), 1:17:58 (masters male), and 1:26:39 (overall female/masters female). There were 748 5K finishers and the winning times were 16:15 (overall male), 18:46 (masters male), 19:08 (overall female), and 20:04 (masters female).

I looked for Austin's Frank Livaudais at the start line as I knew he would be there to run his state #49. He said he was going to "take it easy" because he had not fully recovered from running the Boston Marathon in 3:06 two weeks earlier. He ran the Providence in 3:15:14. I guess "take it easy" means different things to different people!

I ran the first half in 1:55 (8:46 pace) and finished in 4:04:42 (9:20 pace). My conditioning was good enough for 18 or 19 miles of running. The rest relied heavily on willpower and pride!