

# Reflections on Triumph Over Pain #1

By Randy Blancq

Founder of the USC Quench the Fire 5K Run/Walk/Roll



Last Saturday, May 16<sup>th</sup>, my mom, my girlfriend, and I flew out from sunny California to McKinney, Texas to attend the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Triumph Over Pain 5K. My friend, Tricia Scott, put this run together in five months which is quite the feat. Having done two runs myself, I know how labor intensive it can be. On top of that, between registrations, sponsorships, and donations, the run was a success even prior to the kick-off of the event.

I guess I knew this was a Texas event when we were met by an armadillo upon arrival. It scurried away as we approached, but perhaps it wanted us to know we were on his turf now.



When I say turf, I refer to the beautiful Cooper Fitness Center at Craig Ranch. It was a great place for a run. The rain did its best to dampen our spirits and diminish our numbers. While a few people did stay home, there was still a good turnout for a wet breezy day.

Prior to the run, a couple of notable people spoke. First up was Troy Ray Grimes. Troy is notable in the RSD and running worlds for this reason: Troy runs about 10 runs a year of marathon length or more. Running one marathon in a lifetime is incredible for most people. Troy runs at least 10 a year with some of those being ultra marathons (runs of 26.2 miles or MORE). Troy runs for his wife, Yvette, who has RSD and who was also there at the event. Troy spoke of the importance of bringing awareness of this dreaded condition.



After Troy spoke, the one mile walkers headed out for their turn on the course. For some, this was a courageous effort to overcome their pain to participate. Each walker got a medal for finishing.



After the 1 mile walk was concluded, Dr. Kenneth Cooper, the doctor who coined the term “Aerobics” in 1968, gave a short address to the group. Dr. Cooper has been a huge champion of exercise, fitness, and heart health. He is an internationally recognized doctor and fitness expert who has spoken in 50 countries. He created The Cooper Institute, a non-profit organization dedicated to preventive medicine research and education. And he offered the Cooper Fitness Center to be used by Triumph Over Pain 5K. Just prior to the 5K, Dr. Cooper spoke of the importance of exercise and fitness to overall health.

After Dr. Cooper spoke, it was time for the 5K. Dr. Cooper sounded the horn and we were off. The overcast rainy conditions made for cool running weather. I am guessing many would have chosen that over muggy Texas heat bearing down on our heads. The course was flat and scenic through the grounds of Craig Ranch. The winner checked in with a time of about 19 minutes with the rest of us to follow.

After the race, the top two finishers in each age and gender category were awarded a small trophy. The event was finished off with a raffle for some great prizes. Despite the weather, the event turned out very well, especially for a first year event put together in five months. The money raised went to the Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy Syndrome Association (RSDSA), a 501(c)(3) non-profit dedicated to education and research efforts for RSD. RSDSA promoted and lended its support to the run.



Tricia has been doing a great deal to promote awareness of RSD. This run is the culmination of those efforts. And I know there is a great deal more to come. She has boundless energy, a constant smile, and a huge heart. She is to be commended for her dedication to better the lives of those in pain. Further, Tricia and all of her support staff and volunteers are to be commended for their efforts to make the Triumph Over Pain 5K a success.