



May 14, 2015 – Grand Rapids, MI

Race Volunteer: You Must See to Believe

This is what I saw and what I experienced working the finish line at the Fifth Third River Bank Run.

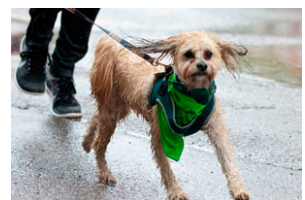
Rain

From the moment I got there at 5 a.m. and pretty much throughout my entire time at the finish line, it rained. Almost seven hours. Even the medals were wet. I'm glad it was 65 degrees with no wind or it could have been more uncomfortable. But for a runner, that's perfect weather: every step cools you down. And of course rain is no obstacle to the dogs intent on winning their race bandanas.



Surprise

Among the 10K finishers, one really overweight guy threw up his hands and said, "I know. I'm surprised, too!" Apparently he was as amazed as everyone else that he'd just run six miles.



Waterproof Mascara

I'm no expert, but Paula has educated me on makeup issues, and waterproof mascara would have been helpful for the women who put on make-up before the race and then ran in the rain. However you can't contain the smiles of people who knew they just completed a challenging physical act, whether their makeup made it to the finish line or not.

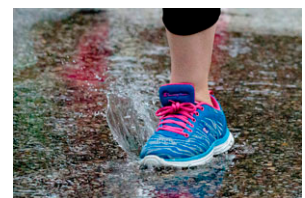
Costumes

There was a run on tutus this year, pun intended, mostly women and girls, but also a few men had on multi-colored tutus during the race including one guy with gold pants. Godzilla and Batman ran as well. People felt the need to express themselves.



Running Gear

You can always tell the experienced from the novice runners: the more cotton clothes people wear, the newer they are. Breathable and wickable synthetic fabrics really help in all kinds of weather. Orange and yellow-green neon are definitely this year's colors, and too many women still don't take sports bras seriously.



Angels

The organization MyTeam Triumph takes turns pushing their Captain, a child or adult with a disability, the entire 25K in a special cart. It's an emotional event for the Captain as well as the team. Awe inspiring.

Tears

Of those who ran the 25K, a number became tearful after they crossed the finish line. The accomplishment of finishing is overwhelming for some people. Others may have been running in memory of someone. Whatever the reason, tears flowed for some.

Saturday, I'm going to finish my observations and comments. I'm also going to lay down a challenge for you that includes where you might be exactly one year from today. Time to step up our game, people.

What are you prepared to do today?

Dr. Chet



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