

From: "John Martin" <jack.martin1@comcast.net>
Date: April 26, 2009 10:50:46 PM EDT
To: <seanmcnamara@hotmail.com>, <ssheehy@mindspring.com>
Subject: Note that describes a next generation Junior Wamp

My grandson Ryan (a second grader) has been a spectator at many marathons. Last Fall, he started practice runs to prepare for a marathon. Ryan is a determined kid – his parents attempted to explain why running a marathon is an unreasonable goal for a young child, but he was not convinced. They decided that the best way to convince Ryan that was to have him run a 5-K with his father.

Ryan and his father Dave did run a 5-K last Fall, but Ryan wasn't fooled – a 5-K is NOT a marathon, so he kept plugging away. He became exasperated and made a final pitch to his parents on April 19. They agreed that he could run the marathon route the next day if he ran 50 laps around my Foxborough property (3 miles). He immediately left the house and ran the 50 laps, so they had to respond in some fashion.

The "Parent Plan":

Ryan, accompanied by his father Dave, would start running in Natick (approx. 8.5 mile mark) and then run to the 12-Mile Water Stop where I was handing out Gatorade. At that point, they expected to ease Ryan off of the course.

Ryan's Plan:

He was going to run a marathon. When they came to the 12-Mile Water Stop, he greeted me, took a quick drink, then resumed running. His shocked and bemused father continued to run along with him. Attempts to have him stop at BC, Cleveland Circle and other points were unsuccessful – he had a marathon to run and he had not yet reached the Finish Line!!!

I picked them up after they crossed the Finish Line in Copley Square. It took Ryan about 4.5 hours to run 17.5 miles – not impressive for an adult, but not too shabby for a kid who celebrated his 8th birthday earlier in the month. Ryan was a bit stiff when he got out of my car at his home in Wayland. However, a hour later he showed no sign of fatigue while running around with one of his neighborhood friends. Ahh-h-h, the vitality of youth.

-Jack Martin