

## Race Report by Paul Nicolaides 11-8-08

I would like to say a few words about the Toy Run 5K in Portland. Sunset Park is located adjacent to Highway 181 between Portland, Texas and Corpus Christi. The park has a 2 mile hike and bike trail which is located along the Texas Coastal Birding Trail. This past Saturday, November 1<sup>st</sup> the City of Portland and the Portland Kiwanis Club sponsored a 5k Run which started at Indian Point and utilized the Parks 2 mile paved trail for an out and back course. The morning was crisp about 63 degrees, sunny with a slight breeze, a picture perfect day. When I got to the race a gentlemen was parking cars along the road about 600 meters from the start as the race planners did not want to fill up the small parking area at Indian Point. Given the size of the race the parking was not a problem. I signed up and got my packet. In the packet was a pen from Citgo and a couple of bottle openers and a very nice white long sleeve t-shirt with simple Toy Run logo and outline of a crane with long legs and a long beak. When I did my warm up I saw a bird just like the one outlined on my shirt, the racing conditions were great. The race started on time, there were several elementary runners from Dawes Elementary school and I had to weave my way around them at the start. The 1 mile water stop was well manned and friendly. By the time we got to the turn around Dave Rodriguez, was way out in front. There was another water stop at 2 miles and we got oranges, bananas and bottled water at the finish. I wasn't happy with my time 20:39, since I had run a 19:06 the week before then Joe Howard, who was wearing a GPS wrist watch, had recorded 3.41 miles as the distance. Ah, I felt better. The results were well organized and read off fairly quickly. There wasn't time to clap and give much fanfare the age group winners. Each received a small card indicating their place, the race name, logo and date. This was the first Toy Run, I thought it was fairly well organized, a beautiful location, great weather and friendly helpful people. The race course may have been a little long and the price 28.00 dollars on race day seemed a little high, but hey it's money for toys so I didn't mind paying a little more then I'm used to paying. I would recommend this race if you want a flat fast course to tune for the CCRR Thanksgiving Day Turkey Trot.