

Surfside Beach Marathon
Surfside Beach, TX
Saturday, February 18, 2012
7:00 AM

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Surfside Beach is a small coastal town on the Gulf of Mexico, west of Galveston Island & south of Houston. First of all, we all knew that it would be raining hard, resulting in a tough marathon to run. The blowing rain, wind, streams of rain water, & washed out beach sands made it quite challenging & rather unpleasant, indeed. Nevertheless, personally, I was glad that the run was not canceled. Surprisingly, the race organizers offered refunds to those who had decided not to show up!

The packet pickup on Friday afternoon/evening was very efficient. Each runner received a long-sleeved technical shirt, a ceramic tile with the name & logo of the event on it, & a personalized bib number. This was my first time running the Surfside Beach Marathon; thus, I was given a nice duffle bag too!

Race morning temperature was in the 60s. We ran on the beach for 26.2 miles. We first ran an out-&-back for about 5 miles towards S/SW & then the longer out-&-back towards N/NE. There were mile markers. I thanked the volunteers for staying out there in the heavy rain, staffing the aid stations & remaining cheerful & encouraging.

The finisher's medal was nice. There were plenty of recovery food items & drinks awaiting the finishers inside the community center at Stahlman Park (BBQ, breakfast tacos, smoothies, cookies, oranges, soft drinks, & bottled water). It was a well-organized running event & it was obvious that the race organizers had done everything they could to make it a runner-friendly event. If the weather cooperates, it can be a nice marathon to run.

There were 161 (111 male, 50 female) finishers in the average time of 4:53:05. The winning times were 2:56:31 (overall male), 3:26:52 (overall female), 3:15:12 (masters male), & 3:55:04 (masters female). There were 384 half marathon finishers & the winning times were 1:31:18 (overall male), 1:40:48 (overall female), 1:36:00 (masters male), & 1:56:19 (masters female).

I ran the first half in 2:21 (10:45 pace) & crossed the finish line in 4:38:18 (10:37 pace). I placed 65 out of 161 overall, 52 out of 111 among males, & 12 out of 31 in my age-group. The 2 trips to porta potties, located a distance away from the beach, cost me nearly 7 minutes! All things considered, I was pleased with my efforts. This was my marathon #91.

