

Featured Runner of the Month – July, 2011

Tonya Paxton

Editor's Note: Tonya ran her first WCC race in 2006, and has not missed one since. She is the 2009 WCC 19-24 F Age-Group winner.

Our next featured runner is Tonya Paxton. A former high school cheerleader, Tonya now keeps herself fit & healthy through running. As a relative newcomer to the activity, her efforts are starting to bear fruit as she's become a threat to win her age group in most any WCC event. Tonya took some time out of her busy schedule to share her thoughts as a runner.

When did you become a runner? Do you remember your first race?

I started running my first year out of high school in 2005. I remember being very nervous about coming in last at my first race.

How many miles do you normally try to run in a week?

I usually run around 15-20 miles a week.

What motivates you to run?

People have different ways of getting rid of stress. When I am feeling stressed out, I am motivated to get out and run. It helps me clear my mind and take my stress out on the pavement.

Do you have a favorite race? A favorite WCC race? What has been your most memorable race?

My favorite race is the Turkey Chase 7K. My most memorable race was the race I just completed on June 25th. I ran my best time ever, 25:02!!

What are your short term & long term goals as a runner?

I would like to see my time get a little better. A long term goal would be to talk myself into another half-marathon.

The WCC season has seen some events become off-road races in recent years. What are your thoughts on off-road running?

At first, I didn't really like the whole idea of being off-road. But after running the race last year, I realized I enjoy it more because it is shaded and it feels better on my legs afterwards.

What's the best & worst thing about running for you?

The best thing about running is that it makes me feel relaxed and stress free. The worst thing about running is once I get into a routine of running, it is hard for me to take a couple of days off to rest my legs.

What advice would you pass along to a beginning runner?

The Wayne County Challenge makes running enjoyable. Take time to rest, but also challenge yourself to get a little quicker each time you run. Don't get into a routine and tell yourself how many miles you are going to run each day. I have found that my body tells me when to do longer and shorter distances. Also, find a friend to take up running with you so you can experience it together.

This interview was conducted by Dale Bolser for the WCC.

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