Florida Track Club

Newsletter

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Member Profile

Richard Ritari

Age: 42
Occupation: Senior Information Systems Engineer at Medical Manager Research & Development (A division of WebMD) in Alachua, FL.

Richard has been running for 12 years and an FTC member since 1995. He grew up in Minnesota (most recently Minneapolis) and has been in the Gainesville area since 1995.

Favorite race and why?
The San Diego Marathon (which is actually in Carlsbad - go figure!). You run along the ocean for several miles on the way out and again on the way back. The rhythmic sound of the waves crashing 200 feet away almost puts you in a trance and makes the running easy. I truly swear I "lost" about 3-4 miles in that race one year!

Favorite local race and why?
"Hustle for Humanity", sponsored by the UF Habitat for Humanity chapter. This race is all on the UF campus, but instead of just going on roads or sidewalks, goes from the road across grass through a thick section of trees back out across a road, down a sidewalk and back through another wooded area. Lot's of turns and so completely out of the ordinary that it is a blast! I guess you could call this race "Urban Cross Country?"

Favorite training place?
Pretty much anywhere outdoors. Give me a winding tree lined road and I am perfectly at home. I also love to go running when I travel. Running in Central Park in New York on a Sunday morning, or in Golden Gate Park in San Francisco, or running early on a foggy morning in rural Ireland, or running 1/4 mile laps on a huge cruise ship in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, or running a race in Las Vegas or San Diego or Vermont or any of a dozen other locales. Some of my very best vacations were vacations that just happened to include a race in them at some point. That way you truly know that you discovered what the area was really like.

Training pace?
7:30-7:45 in the morning, 7:00-7:15 at night.

What are your PR's?
1 Mile: 5:21, 5K: Sub 6:00 pace, 10K: Sub 6:30 pace, Half Marathon: Sub 7:00 pace, Marathon: Sub 8:00 pace

Number of marathons? triathlons?
6 - Marathons, 22 - Half Marathons, 11 - 15K's, 26 - 10K's, 82 - 5K's, Numerous Misc Distance Races (4 Mile, 8K, 10 Mile, etc), 50 - "Multi-Sport" Events - Biathlons (Run/Shoot/Run), Duathlons (Run/Bike/Run), Triathlons (Swim/Bike/Run) from Indoor and Sprint distance to Olympic and Half Ironman distances, 244 races total.

Running Goals?
To enjoy running for itself, and to be able to run for a very long time. I typically don't "train", but instead just go out the door and run. I run because I can, and because I discovered that it is something I am naturally good at. I have discovered some very wonderful aspects of life and the world around me while out for a run. I refer to it as "Meditating with my Nike's on". Daunting puzzles about work or life can be solved in amazing clarity while running. Over the past several years I have come to greatly enjoy running with a group of friends on a semi-regular basis. Nothing makes the miles go by easy like the company of other runners, except maybe the breakfast afterwards!

Personal philosophy?
Make a difference in other people's lives. Do things that help out others, and you will find that your own life is immensely enriched for it. Give blood, buy groceries for the food bank, volunteer with whatever group you enjoy being part of (My personal favorite in Habitat for Humanity), and don't be afraid to do the right thing. When it's all said and done, it's not what we did for ourselves that will be remembered, but it's what we did for those around us and the lives that we touched in our journey in life.

Person you most admire?
My parents. My father was one of the most intellectual and inventive people I have ever met. My mother was one of the most giving and understanding people to match. They instilled in me a strong work ethic and the ability to be able to handle anything that came along in life. And the best part was that they both had an incredible sense of humor, which would explain where I get what some would call my slightly off centre comedic nature!

Do you cross train? How?
I don't specifically do it to cross train, but more as training for other events. When I find the motivation to lift weights I have discovered that I can run noticeably faster in races. (I also notice that my flexibility increases noticeably when I do yoga, which I never seem to find the time for lately) I only swim during triathlon season (I swim like a concrete block but make up for it during the bike and run). I bike year round with the Gainesville Cycling Club, both for fun and as training for triathlons and longer cycling events. This year I will be spending a lot of my time cycling, in preparation for the Five Points of Life Ride, in which I will be one member of a team of 10 riders biking from the Canadian border in Minnesota to Tampa Bay over 7 weeks!

The one thing runners may not know about me is…
I was world ranked in rowing in 1995. (2500 Meter Heavy Weight).