



# Kara's Corner

## Running the London Marathon

By Kara Martin

If you were to ask me about my experience with the London Marathon, I would reply, in a nutshell, "So much fun." Odd, you might say, as the weather was rainy, cold and windy. Odd, you might say, as "fun" is not a likely response to pushing your body 26.2 miles over the course of several hours. However, fun it was. If you will indulge me this month, I will elaborate.

At 9:45 am, the gunshot rang out and we were off. Actually, my two running buddies and I couldn't hear the gun as we had placed ourselves strategically near the back of the lineup. What we heard was a wave of cheering and we began walking towards the start. Twenty minutes later we had made our way to the official start line and our journey began.

Surrounding us were the masses of popular runners raising money for charities. Nearly all were wearing shirts advertising their causes: multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, cancer, heart disease, meningitis, birth defects. It was moving to see the woman running for her son who had died of leukemia at 13. It was moving to see the runners afflicted with the very diseases they were raising money for participating in the race. It was moving to see the runners with trashcans strapped to their backs in order to collect coins from spectators along the way. It was even moving to see the folks dressed up in elaborate costumes raising awareness for everything from autism to saving the rhinoceros.

I traveled on this adventure with the Spanish contingency of runners. The majority of the Spaniards on the trip were there to try and beat their best time. In fact, I laughed with one man from Seville that the concept of simply running the race to finish is lost upon many of his countrymen.

At mile 14 my friends and I noticed an orange turban bobbing along in front of us. Could it be? We were approaching the 93-year old man from India who was competing in the race. Mr Singh began running 10 years ago as a hobby and completed his first marathon in 2000 at age 89. He served as a visible reminder to everyone who saw him that it is never too late to start.

In the end, the marathon may well be a beautiful metaphor for life. Many will line up at the start. Our experiences along the way will be different. Some will give up and never make it to the finish. And then, at the finish line, some will be crying with joy while others will shed tears of pain. As for me, I would be happy if at the end of life as at the end of the London Marathon I can say, in a nutshell, "So much fun."

*Interested in training for a marathon or simply starting a running program? I followed Jeff Galloway's website: [www.runinjuryfree.com](http://www.runinjuryfree.com) for wonderful tips to complete the race.*



**Married to a Spaniard and living in Madrid--this go around--for over 2 1/2 years, Kara spends most of her time running after her two young sons and in the streets of Majadahonda.**