

## 2007 - Another Year of Running of an Old Biscuit

In May, I ran my hometown's Vancouver Marathon. I was disappointed to find out that my finishing time was 2 minutes slower than last year's. Excuses? I could blame it on under training, my foot injury, the poor weather, and of course, aging. The actual reason? My wife and kids kept calling me on my cell phone in the end stage of the race when I needed to concentrate on my run the most. I had to stop, walk, and wrestle my phone out of my fanny pack while wearing gloves. The passing runners were amused to hear me screaming into the phone saying, "Yes, I may be slow but I am still alive!" I think my wife must have read my life insurance policy and was hoping for a windfall. To be honest, I had no energy left in my tank at that point. I was looking for a face saving distraction so that I could stop running and avoid putting on a "heroic" attempt at a strong finishing. The mind over body theory just didn't work for me.

In June, I ran the Scotiabank Half Marathon in Vancouver. Despite my self-doubt at the starting line and the untimely rainstorm during the race, I had a great run. My time was almost three minutes faster than my last "half" race. I placed a respectable 19<sup>th</sup> in my age group. An old biscuit was beaming with pride and smiles at the finish line. It was a sweet revenge of the May marathon and a vindication of my forever-young knees.

I trained hard over the summer and fall months for the December ING Marathon in Taipei. I arrived in Taipei a few days before the race feeling fit and without injury. I was planning to get some well-deserved rest and then take on the 42K distance. What happened next was real and I did not make this up—my baby tooth started to hurt! Yes, my last remaining Old Faithful baby tooth named First Molar that's been with me since age one finally decided not to have anything to do this nutty marathon running any more. It wanted to take its 40 years overdue retirement and get out of the race. To make a long 42K story short: Tylenol is not an effective tooth painkiller. My "mind over tooth" theory did not work either. I had a disappointing finishing time but was nevertheless proud of crossing the finishing line one last time with my Old Faithful.

On the day after the race, I had the tooth extracted!! I wanted to set an example for my other teeth to see what had happened to a quitter. The final resting place for my Old faithful is now hanging together with my Taipei ING Marathon Finisher Medal. Incidentally, all of my remaining teeth and body parts have just reaffirmed their allegiance to me for my next May 2008 Marathon in Ottawa—thanks to my Old Faithful.

My running goals for 2008: Keep the pace up and avoid achieving a new low in finishing time or body weight. My sharing to all classmates: please stay active for good fun and good health. We need our bodies to carry your brains around.



*David Sze & son Andrew, photo by daughter Andrea*