

Sarah Gentelin completes Boston Marathon in goal time

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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Sarah Gentelin accomplished one of the goals of her lifetime this week – completing the 26.2-mile Boston Marathon in a time of 3 hours, 33 minutes.

“Everything went well; I was very happy with my time,” she said. “It was cold, rainy and windy, although I would take that over hot and sunny any day. The temperatures were below the 40s the whole race.”

Gentelin had established a personal goal of 3 hours and 30 minutes and she was within just a few minutes of that.

She did specific training for the race and it paid off, as she was strong on race day.

“The race starts 26 miles out of Boston,” she said. “They close the roads at 7 in the morning. I left town at 6 a.m. and my race started at 11 a.m. We sat in a charter bus with heat before the race started.”

When she hit the nicknamed “Heartbreak Hill” of the Boston Marathon slightly after the 20-mile mark, she said she was suffering from fatigue and having cramps, but Gentelin said she pushed through. The fan support throughout the race was unbelievable, she said and at the end of the race, the cheers were almost deafening.

Gentelin added that she did a lot of training at Forest Park in St. Louis, which helped her.

The hills on the Boston course made it difficult, she said. “The course is pretty hard on the legs,” she adds.

Sarah and her husband, Ryan, own the popular Gentelin’s Restaurant in Alton. She said running is her release and something she loves. Ryan and her children were present at the marathon and she said she greatly appreciated their support.

Sarah is an Alton graduate, but didn’t participate in sports then. Her running is something she discovered after opening the restaurant. She averaged about 50 miles a week during her heavy marathon training for the Boston race. She said she enjoys running outside and that is what she prefers rather than running on the treadmill.

Her advice to other runners wanting to run a 26.2-mile marathon is to be patient and set small goals.

She said she will definitely run another 26.2-mile marathon, possibly one in the fall.

Running her first Boston Marathon is something she said she will never forget and with her time in the race she already qualified for next year.

“I loved the experience. Even with the cold and rain, spectators showed an amazing turnout. I think it is just an amazing tradition involved. They have mile markers permanently painted on the road for the race.”