

# My First Boston Marathon Experience

By Laurie Sloan

The time had finally come to experience what all runners dream to be a part of... the Boston Marathon! On our way to Boston on Thursday, April 17th....then...Friday evening, we met up with friends at the CHEERS bar (Norm was sitting at the other end) for a beer and of course some New England Clam Chowder! Of course, we were all excited waiting for the big day.

Saturday morning, we headed over to the Hynes Convention Center (which happened to be across the street from our hotel) to pick up our race packets and to visit the 112th Boston Marathon Expo. Now talking about expos, this is what you would call an Expo!

Thousands of vendors handing out freebies (always fun to accept even if we end up throwing them out) as you enter this huge convention hall. We took a few hours walking around buying stuff we really didn't need but "had to buy" just because...I'm sure you all know what I mean...It's all part of the "experience."

Saturday evening we enjoyed the best Italian cuisine (pasta for short) at Lucias located in the North End (Italian District).

Sunday was my day of rest as I sat in the Jacuzzi loosening up and just cruising around town. For those who haven't been to Boston what a great city; clean, friendly people, incredible architectural history and lots more!

Finally it was Monday morning (Patriots Day for the Bostonians!!) First check was the weather forecast (high of 58 degrees). Wonderful! Next to Boston Common which is a huge park where everyone lined up to get on the shuttle buses. What efficiency getting through the lines to the shuttle bus (more than 20,000 runners).

Finally we were on the bus and on our way to Hopkington. We arrived at the Athlete Village just around 9 a.m. (Wave two started at 10:30 a.m. Found a friend from Chicago to hang out with since I couldn't find the Hawaii House (where Candes Gentry and the rest of the Hawaii runners were).

In a short time thereafter, we were instructed to head to the start...just follow the crowd...sooner than we thought we were off.

The entire course was an experience never to be forgotten. The support of the crowd was indescribable as we ran through the suburbs back to Boston. For the first time in my life, I actually felt like a celebrity as the Bostonians shouted out my name (on my shirt) and cheered on Hawaii (also on my shirt) almost the entire 26.2 miles.

My favorite part of the race was at the half way point when you could hear roaring thunder as we were approaching Wellesley College where the Wellesley girls were all lined up and were high fiving everyone who came along. I think I used up half my energy giving them my "aloha" while having so much fun at the same time.

Chip time: 5:18:11.

I'm hoping to go back in 2010 for another great experience!