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USING AGE GRADED RESULTS

AGE GRADED RESULTS

Below are 3 tables showing Age Graded Results and how one can use them for goal setting, results measurement and motivation. Age adjusted results are now published in many races and nearly all the larger well attended ones. They are based on curves which say a runner will peak out in performance between ages 25 and 35 years old. Before age 25 one gains speed and after we start that long decline. In later years the decline becomes steeper and steeper. But using this measurement we can all stay motivated to compete.

AGE GRADED RESULTS TYPICAL OF A LARGE RACE:

Race	% WAVA	Finishers	% of Finishers
World Class	> 90%	1	0.025%
Near World Class	85% to 89%	8	0.20%
National Class	80% to 84%	38	1.00%
Near National Class	75% to 79%	82	2.00%
All Others	< 75%	3881	96.725%

My Race Results:				Age Adj.	Age Adj.
				Time	Pace
Naples	1/2 M	Jan.-11	81.0%	1:13:05	5:35
Edison	5K	Feb.-05	80.4%	16:03	5:10
Naples	1/2 M	Jan.-10	80.3%	1:13:44	5:38
River	10K	Dec.-04	80.0%	33:35	5:24
Edison	5K	Feb.-04	79.8%	16:10	5:12
Naples 1/2	1/2 M	Jan.-09	79.4%	1:14:34	5:42
Run for Music	10K	Apr.-10	78.9%	34:01	5:28

Bear Water Run	10M	Sept.-11	78.7%	56:22	5:38
Gasparilla	15K	Feb.-05	78.3%		
P. F. Chang	1/2 M	Jan.-05	78.2%		
Gasparilla	15K	Feb.-09	78.0%		
TC	10 Mile	Oct.-04	77.8%		
Plymouth	8K	June.-04	77.5%		
Roseville	10K	June.-04	77.4%		
Hudson	1/2 M	Aug.-04	76.8%		
Edison	5K	Feb.-03	76.8%		
Lumberjack	10 Mile	Jul.-09	76.5%		
Naples	1/2 M	Jan.-08	76.2%		
Gasparilla	15K	Jan.-03	76.2%		
TC	10 Mile	Oct.-03	75.7%		
Austin	1/2 M	Feb.-02	75.6%		
Gasparilla	15K	Feb.-08	75.1%		

Note: Class percentages are based on an actual Gasparilla 15K.

Age adjusted results reduce the time and pace to an equivalent 25 to 35 year old runner.

Peak Mileage and Age Graded Results:											
	Race	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	Temp/ D. P.	% Age Adj.	Age
FL 2011	Naples							73.3	52/ 50	80.2%	73
FL 2010	Naples							71.1	67/ 66	79.6%	72
FL 2009	Naples						66.6		53/ 48	78.7%	71
MIN 2011	Bear Water						66.0		64/ 59	78.7%	73
FL 2005	Gasp.					55.5			43/39	78.3%	67
MIN 2004	TC 10					53.7			42/35	77.8%	66
FL 2013	Naples						63.8		64/ 64	77.5%	75
MIN 2010	TC 10					56.1			45/34	76.9%	72

MIN 2012	Bear Water				47.9				56/ 42	76.8%	74
FL 2003	Gasp.				49.8				/ 40	76.2%	65
FL 2008	Naples				48.2				55/ 48	76.2%	70
MIN 2003	TC 10				42.0				/ 40	75.7%	65
MIN 2008	TC 10					53.1			50/ 37	75.0%	70
MIN 2009	TC 10					56.0			45/ 43	74.8%	71
FL 2015	Naples					56.2			59/58	74.6%	77
MIN 2015	TC 10				45.0				42/ 37	74.1%	77
MIN 2.006	TC 10					51.0			49/ 43	74.0%	68
MIN 2005	TC 10				48.5				65/ 58	73.8%	67
FL 2004	Naples			38.0					/ 68	73.4%	66
MIN 2002	TC 10				45.4				53/	72.9%	64
FL 2006	Naples				49.3				66/ 66	72.2%	68
MIN 2013	Bear Water				48.2				52 /44	71.8%	75
MIN 2007	TC 10					50.9			74/68	71.5%	69
MIN 2014	TC 10			35.1					35/ 29	71.0%	76
MIN 2016	TC 10				41.8				36/ 34	70.4%	78
FL 2007	Injured								Planter Fascitis		
FL 2012	"								Foot/ Leg from 20K		
FL 2014	"								MCL Rt.Knee from no Warm-up		
FL 2016	"								Rt. Foot Injury		

Notes:

- Peak Mileage is a Good Predictor of result but also of injury.
- Races within 10 weeks are damaging……races within 3 weeks are death.
- FL Injuries are surely from racing too much. No MN Injuries.
- Walk Breaks are helpful racing at low mileage 2014
- 1/2 Mile walks at start of training runs from 2014
- Race Plan from 2014 on should be TC 10 and Naples Half with peak Mileage of ~50.

More on Age Graded Results, Running in Old Age and How to Stay Motivated

Several years ago my wife and I were playing golf with an old friend who at that time was 94 years young. His hearing was nearly zero but he still played golf and actually he played quite competitively. On our #13 hole a par 5, one Sunday he hit three rather remarkable shots and reached the green in regulation. He followed that with a 30 foot putt into the hole for a sweet birdie. But….but he had a three shot (handicap) on that hole and thus scored a "hole in one".

Golf and running share one important component which allows us to enjoy both sports very late in life. Each has a handicap system.

I have been a member of our local club, Gulf Coast Runners for about 15 years. We should be proud of our club and appreciative of all the work our BOD, members and volunteers do for us. This is without any doubt one of the great running clubs anywhere as evidenced by the growing participation in our races and the quality of runners that join us.

Our races are well run. They are safe. They are on beautiful courses. Our winter weather is largely conducive to running and racing. And maybe most importantly, our primary charity GCR Youth Scholarship Fund rewards our local runners who are entering college and will be taking one giant step to sustainably improving their financial well-being.

For obvious reasons our club and our races attract more than average portion of older runners. Typically, we will have a larger percentage of "super senior" runners compared to races across the country.

Actually, we have a beautiful distribution from the very young to very old…..boys and girls…..men and women. Gulf Coast Runners Races are the poster for Run For Life and all the benefits running provides to each of us.

What I would like to discuss in this article is competitive running as one gets older and older. How do we stay motivated? How do we avoid injury? Can we still compete with the young kids in their 60s? ! ! !

Age Graded Results:

Most races now publish age graded results and our local club has done so for a number of years. In our recent Gold Medal Race the age graded results were as follows:

Percentage of Finishers

90 %	1 (Jeanie Rice)	4 %
80 to 89 %	3	1.2 %
75 to 79 %	7	2.8 %
70 to 74 %	21	8.4 %

	Total Finishers ~250	

Comparing that to the Twin Cities 10 mile October 7, 2016:

Percentage of Finishers

90 %	1	01 %
80 to 89 %	52	0.6 %
75 to 79 %	99	1.1 %
70 to 74 %	202	2.2 %
	Total Finishers 9150	

Now what does this mean? Simply stated it means the races at our local club are attended by a percentage of runners significantly better than most well attended races. Actually, I did the same calculations for the Gasparilla 15 k several years ago. They were slightly better than the Twin Cities probably due to course difficulty but still not near what our races will grade out.

In case you haven't looked carefully Jeanie Rice is 67 years old. And btw the one person who ran above 90 % in the Twin Cities was a 63 year old female. And also by the way Karen Miles ran above 90 % in this year's Edison 5k. Women are now making up a larger and larger percentage of race participants. As you can tell they're very good.

Five year age groups all the way to 90:

Something new in GCR race results is age groups all the way to 90. As we age running against someone younger becomes an increasingly impossible task.

To satisfy a personal objective (which I'll keep to myself at this point), I calculated exactly how we slow down as we age according to the age graded formulas. Here's what I found:

For men the decline per year is as follows:

- Age 69 to 70 slower by 0.9 % (per year !)
- Age 74 to 75 slower by 1.7 % "
- Age 79 to 80 slower by 2.3 % "
- Age 84 to 85 slower by 3.4 % "
- Age 89 to 90 slower by 5.1 % (and mind you that is each and every year !)

I would be happy to calculate the same information for women, but I'm thinking they would not necessarily be happy with me for doing so. Suffice it to say as we age, we get slower at an accelerating rate.

Just to carry this logic to an extreme here are the differences in results for the same 75 % age graded time for our Naples Half Marathon where the oldest male is trying to compete with the youngest in 5 year age groups:

Age Groups Time difference to achieve the same 75 % Age Graded

- Age 74 vs. 70 6 minutes slower or about 30 seconds per mile pace
- Age 79 vs. 75 9 minutes slower or about 45 seconds per mile pace
- Age 84 vs. 80 14 minutes slower or about 1 minute per mile pace
- Age 89 vs. 85 25 minutes slower or about 2 minutes per mile pace.

To compete in age groups of 5 years becomes more and more difficult as we age. Age groups such as “70 and above” should never be used. Age graded results allow us to compete with the entire field and that’s where the focus should be.