



Sweaty She Monday (4/6/09): Cat Woman and Wonder Woman vs The Marathoner

By Susan Farago

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My two running buddies (Laura and Richelle) and I road tripped up to Dallas this past weekend for the "Big D Marathon" on Sunday. Richelle was running and Laura and I were supporting. But in order to show our FULL support of Richelle, Laura and I decided to dress up as super heroes (OK, I talked Laura into this brilliant idea). Laura was Cat Woman and I was Wonder Woman*. And I can honestly say the duties of a super hero are daunting...and a whole lot of FUN!!!

We got up Sunday morning and while Richelle put on her running gear, Laura and I transformed ourselves into Cat Woman and Wonder Woman. I thought Richelle was going to die laughing. I then placed a red star on Richelle's visor to give her super power mojo for the race. We were set. We made our way through the hotel lobby...and it didn't matter that people were staring at us – we had a job to do. Our first job was to transport Richelle to the race start.

Since I didn't have time to sew an invisible airplane (one of Wonder Woman's cool gadgets), we took Richelle's truck. The Big D is a relatively small race – approximately 500 runners for the marathon and half marathon distances – so when we arrived, you can imagine how much we stood out. But that's OK – just one of the many issues super heroes have to deal with – like actually having to stand in the porta-potty line (we would discover more issues as the morning wore on).



At 8:00am the runners were in position and Cat Woman and I were a little ways up the road to cheer the runners on as they passed. If you imagine us standing on the side of the course, stoically awaiting to spread good cheer to all the runners as they passed, that's not exactly accurate. We were actually hiding behind a Dallas squad car trying to keep warm as the wind was really strong and cold. Cat Woman's short skirt kept flying up (think Marilyn Monroe) and I was using my calf-length cape as a blanket.

We jumped out from behind the squad car just long enough to cheer the runners as they ran by and after the last runner passed, we used our super powers of "speed" and bolted for the car to get warm. We actually lost each other in the parking lot and at one point Cat Woman asked a rather confused looking guy, "Hey, did you see Wonder Woman?" He said, "She's over there." and pointed to where I and the car were awaiting Cat Woman (who had the keys).

We drove to mile 5 aid station and waited in the car. En route, I discovered that Cat Woman does not have the greatest eyesight (oh the irony). I'd say we were looking for such-and-such road and as we approached EVERY intersection, she would say, "Oh I think this is it" – not being able to read the street sign until we were RIGHT on top of it.

As the first runner appeared, we got out of the car, ran across the street, and stood with the cheering spectators. One runner couldn't stop staring at me (probably was wondering if he was seeing things) and nearly missed the turn. The police officer standing on the corner laughed and said to me, "You're distracting the runners!" Well of course I am! I am Wonder Woman!!! Duh!!

We spotted Richelle and started yelling and cheering. As she passed, I ran with her and asked how she was doing. She looked great! I wished her well and she continued on. As I turned to walk back to Cat Woman, I hadn't realized my cape had blown behind me and caught on a fence. I took two steps and heard a RIIIPPPPP and the string holding my cape nearly choked me as I was yanked backwards. Not cool for Wonder Woman to nearly hang herself – not cool at all. I let out a choking sound and immediately said, "Oh Sh*t" (yes, Wonder Woman does curse). Luckily the ripping sound was the Velcro attaching my cape to shirt. Cat Woman though all this was really funny. I unhung myself and my cape, tried to recover my super hero ego, and we ran back to the car to get warm.

Next stop - mile 9. But first, super heroes need to keep up their energy. We stopped at a doughnut shop for doughnuts and to use their bathroom. We were greeted by a lovely Asian couple who owned the place – "Ahhh loook! Eess suppah woomah an caht laady!!" Our international reputation preceded us. As Cat Woman bought doughnuts, I ran to the bathroom. I would just like to take a moment to say that normally it takes me 15 seconds TOPS to undress, go to the bathroom, and dress. I am a "fast pee'er". Unfortunately this super power was lost as soon as I became Wonder Woman. By the time I unsnapped, unVelcroed, unclipped everything, and then actually went to the bathroom (careful not to get my cape wet) and then re-snapped/Velcroed/clipped everything back into place, I think 5-7 minutes had passed and Cat Woman had already started munching on her chocolate sprinkles doughnut. I don't blame her.

Thanks to doughnut power AND modern technology (“Never Lost” on my phone), we flew to mile 9 on the marathon course in no time. I should say at this point that Cat Woman now had her eye on one of the runners. A male species wearing little Texas Flag running shorts and running shirtless which showed off a very nice physique. She would start to purr every time she saw him. So as he approached, she got very excited and as he passed, she actually jumped out onto the course and ran behind him for a bit. Female spectators thought this was HILARIOUS (and probably envied Cat Woman). Needless to say he caught on to this after we saw him 3-4 more times on the course. Then again, Laura yelling, “Hey Hot Pockets!” didn’t help the matter either. I had visions of the headlines – “Cat Woman and her accomplice Wonder Woman jailed for sexually harassing runner at Big D marathon.” And because I was standing by her (and I stood out like a sore thumb in my red cape) I would also be incriminated too. Great.

Thankfully Richelle came and she looked a bit windblown but good – having just ran through the windiest part of the course. We cheered and she laughed at our crazy antics. Go Richelle! She passed and the wind was just awful so we ran back to the truck to warm up. The runners would be back through this point as the course looped around and came back through at mile 15. So while we waited I got on the Wonder Woman worldwide communication channel (aka: texting on my phone) and gave status updates to Richelle’s close friends and boyfriend. We saw the front runners coming through at mile 15 so we jumped out and started to cheer again.



At this point, many of the runners had gotten used to seeing us out on the course and they were starting to high-five us and smile as we’d yell, “Way to go!” or “You’re looking great!” A few of the runners did NOT want to make eye contact with us. It was probably something inappropriate that Cat Woman had done that I wasn’t aware of (ha!). Richelle came through nice and strong and I took off to run with her for about a minute. I ran past her through the aid station and got the crowd to yell and cheer as she ran through. We rounded the corner past the band in bunny suits (yes you read this correctly) and straight

into a headwind. I was chatting with her but secretly had a fear my cape was going to get hung on something again even though I was in the middle of the road. Then she was off and so were we.

Next stop – mile 17. We were the only ones standing in the middle of a long stretch of road so the runners could definitely see us. Again, we got smiles, cheers, and we returned the favor. Texas Hot Pockets ran past and of course, Cat Woman started chasing after him...again. Another guy actually ran up to me and quite breathlessly asked if I'd be at the finish line. I said, "yes" and he handed me the big fuzzy jacket he had tied around his neck and had been running with for the past 17 miles. We had seen him on the course earlier and thought he was a homeless person because the jacket placement looked so odd. He gave me a big, sweaty hug (did I mention that Wonder Woman does NOT like to be hugged?) and off he went. Then another guy stopped and asked when the next water stop was. Having no idea, I handed him my water bottle. He needed it! He drank and then off he went. Meanwhile Cat Woman was still traipsing around after Texas Hot Pockets...or getting into some other mischief. Richelle came and Cat Woman ran after her cheering and yelling words of support and encouragement. We were indeed doing our job as Richelle would smile and laugh.

We tried to get to mile 20 but the police intercepted us with road closures. But NeverLost got us to where we needed to go and soon we were standing out on the corner cheering runners again and keeping an eye out for Richelle. And here she came – looking amazing for what the weather conditions were dealing her. The wind was still so strong and wicked but she kept battling on. I was hoping it was the mojo of our super powers but I knew better – she's simply an amazing, tough, and strong runner.

Mile 23 – the next stop. After some illegal maneuvers and driving over a few curbs, Cat Woman got us into an ideal parking position. We jumped out of the car and ran over to the intersection where the runners were coming through. Unfortunately this was a very busy traffic intersection. So while the runners had gotten used to seeing Cat Woman and Wonder Woman, motorists had not. People had cell phones hanging out of windows taking our photos. And we weren't in the best part of town either so I was hoping that a car full of "dudes" wasn't going to drive up and proposition us. We saw Richelle but could only yell and cheer for her as she was on the other side of the busy street. "SEE YOU AT THE FINISH LINE!!" we yelled.

We flew towards the finish line and as we entered the fairground area, we weren't exactly sure where to park since the start and finish lines were in different places. Cat Woman was a driver possessed – we didn't want to miss Richelle! She rolled down her window and yelled to a race finisher, "WHERE'S THE FINISH LINE!" The guy looked very surprised and a little confused as to why Cat Woman was a) driving a car; b) with Wonder Woman; and c) asking HIM for directions. He said, "Over there" and pointed. Cat Woman whipped an illegal U-turn and flew into the "Staff Only" parking area and parked. We figured if anyone gave us crap, Cat Woman could just scratch their eyes out. We ran through the park-like area and people were once again staring. A couple of guys who just finished the race were yelling, "Go Wonder Woman!!" as we ran past. We got to the finish line totally out of breath but we made it before Richelle.

By this time we were looking a little disheveled. Cat Woman's ears were a little crooked, her black painted nose and whiskers long gone, and my hair was all over the place and I had a serious wedgie going on under that cape! We regrouped and within 2 minutes, we saw Richelle in the distance. We started yelling and hollering. We decided to run into the finish line behind her so as she approached, we tucked in behind and were cheering her as she brought the 26.2 miles to an end. The spectators were cheering and yelling for her as she crossed the finish line. She finished top 50 overall and placed 2nd in her age group!! We all hugged (OK, Wonder Woman is a hugger if friends are involved) and once she caught her breath, we posed for a photo: Richelle in the middle and her two super heroes on either side.

As we checked out of the hotel later that day our roles had reversed. Cat Woman and Wonder Woman had returned to "ordinary" people – and it was now Richelle who was the super hero.

*I am a bit of a seamstress - when the spirit moves me - so I actually made my costume. Using my craft, sewing, and "Magyver" like skills, I turned a men's XL speedo, boy's XL underarmor top, the sleeves from a woman's long sleeve shirt, and a bunch of sequins and fabric, into a Wonder Woman outfit.