



**Sweaty She Monday (8/24/09):  
What's That Smell? The Nose Knows!**

**By Susan Farago**

*Weekly Sweaty She postings can be found on "Sweaty She" on Facebook.com or at [www.susanfarago.com](http://www.susanfarago.com).*

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If you train in an area long enough you become familiar with the scenery, the sounds, and the smells. When I first started running in Lakeway along Ranch Road 620, there was so much road kill that I learned to distinguish dead deer (sweet and slightly pungent) from dead raccoon (just plain pungent) and other dead things. And if you spend enough time running or walking around a city trail like Town Lake (for the record I refuse to call it Ladybird Lake), you know the smell of the bats under the Congress Avenue bridge or the places where there are WAY too many dogs.

My husband claims I can smell stuff a mile away and whenever I smell something odd, he says I always announce, "WHAT'S THAT SMELL?!" For me, it's a means of collecting and analyzing data to determine if action is required. For example, if I walk into the kitchen and something smells sour, does that mean I have to clean out the refrigerator? Take out the garbage? Or look for a workout sock that may have fallen under a cabinet?

Knowing smell sources can also provide other useful information, such as:

If you store your running or cycling shoes in the closet and you nearly get knocked over by the smell when you open the door, it's probably time for new shoes.

If you take a shower after being out in the sun and you STILL smell like sunscreen, it means your sunscreen is indeed waterproof. However it probably also means you need to take another shower.

If your training clothes smell like sulfur (think lit match) after a workout, it means you are actually breaking down protein (muscle) and using it for fuel -- not good. Solution? Take in more carbs for fuel source.

If you are in a crowd of people who just got done working out and it smells like body odor, sweat, and who knows what else...and then everyone around you leaves and it STILL smells...then yes, it is you.

If you are swimming in an indoor pool and all of a sudden you not only smell but TASTE an overabundance of perfume and hair care products that means the aqua aerobics class has just started and you're probably about to get chewed out by a little old lady to "get out of her lane".

Despite all the things I've smelled along the way, I do believe the grossest smell I have ever encountered was indeed while running along 620. Deer? Nope. Raccoon? Nope. It was a guy on a motorcycle who passed me ... and it was his armpits.

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