

sun-sentinel.com/news/palm-beach/boca-raton/fl-brf-run-0120-20100120,0,1768169.story

South Florida Sun-Sentinel.com

Area fitness advocate encouraged by growth of 5K race

JASON STROMBERG jstromberg@tribune.com

January 20, 2010

For Roudy Derisse, the best part of last weekend's 5K & Fun Run at Florida Atlantic University was the turnout.

"We doubled in size from last year," said Derisse, a [Delray Beach](#) resident and physical education teacher at Summit Private School.

Seeing the crowd made Derisse appreciate the purpose of the race, which was to fight childhood obesity and promote health and wellness.

"I'm really proud of the parents," he said. "It shows me that they're being role models to their children. We all want to see everyone live that healthy lifestyle."

Derisse wasn't alone Saturday morning. The host, who is looking to help children through his Coach Roudy Fights Childhood Obesity program, had assistance from the [Palm Beach County](#) PTA/PTSA, a nonprofit organization.

Derisse's mission is to instill in kids a lifelong love of physical activity. The day's activities helped provide grants through the [Palm Beach County](#) PTA system aimed at implementing health and wellness programs.

Funds raised are to be used for group sports, martial arts, yoga and dance classes, as well as the purchase of equipment for local schools.

"By having the grants, we are able to distribute them to schools in Palm Beach that don't have after-school enrichment activities," said Derisse, who hosted his first annual run at Tradewinds Park last year. "The PTA and Robin deLisser heard about what I was doing for kids, and together it's become a beautiful marriage. We're in it together as far as the healthy lifestyle message and image."

Jennifer Martinez was on board right from the start. The [Palm Beach County](#) Council president-elect made sure to volunteer alongside her 9-year-old daughter Jackie, who attends Hidden Oaks Elementary School.

"It's important to get kids out and be active," said Martinez, a native of [Boynton Beach](#). "We need to make them aware of childhood obesity. This was a great family day promoting healthy lifestyles."

While Martinez noted that her fourth-grader, Jackie, took part in the Half-Mile Fun Run, the mom helped run the kids' activities on the side. This game-playing section — donated by the Fun Services company — included the frog leap, hammer bell, ring bottle toss, table dunk tank and money machine.



"Without question, the best part is always seeing the kids having fun," said Martinez, who enjoyed watching the children go through Mizner Productions' Freestyle Frenzy inflatable game maze. "They're doing what they've got to do in order to make themselves happy."

Michael Kelly followed suit. The 45-year-old from Royal Palm Beach made the most of the 5K race by placing first as the masters' champion in the 40-and-older category.

"Any race I participate in I like," Kelly said. "This was a great course with some great paths. Overall, it was well-organized — a great event. I love runs, so I don't have anything bad to say. I enjoyed coming."

Kelly's friend and "competitor," as he called Jasper Bell, also placed high in the final standings. The 43-year-old Miamian represented his Runner's Depot Racing Team but had some other racing duties to take care of prior to Roudy's Run.

"This was my second race today," said Bell, who earlier won the masters' title at the Miramar 5K, which started at 7:30 a.m. "Then I pushed over here to this race at the 9 a.m. start because of the cause. This was in my scope, meaning it's something I like to do in order to help the cause. Despite the mystery course, I was able to get third-overall male here and fourth overall in both races."

Several runners had some trouble finding their way through FAU's campus and ended up burning off some extra holiday calories. But as Derisse noted, the more training one does, the better the chance of developing a lifelong love of healthy eating and physical activity.

"I like the family-oriented setting," Bell said. "It encourages activity. You can see it. The extracurricular activity always helps."

For more information on Derisse's efforts, go to <http://www.coachroudy.com> or call 954-394-1489.

Copyright © 2010, [South Florida Sun-Sentinel](#)