

Comfort Food

You gotta running route you go to when you're feeling like you wanna run fast? That place you go run to feed that sense that you have a fast training run in you clamoring to get out. That running itch. That need for speed. I'm not talking about running fast on the track. That has it's place. This is about strength running, sustained running at pace.

I discovered mine over a decade ago. I meandered left off of the main running path into a quiet neighborhood. I found my way back to my usual route. Six miles in all. It's got everything I want when I can taste a fast run.

The first mile along the tree-shaded river path, a slight incline the entire way before turning away from the river and into the regional park. The slight incline progressing between the soccer fields and the left into the neighborhood, the incline continuing to the top of the wooded neighborhood path. That's the salad and appetizer.

Then the plunge out of the wooded path, along a path undulating in its decline to the street, down to the turn onto the spine, a .4-mile shaded path along a stream, emptying out to the earlier neighborhood path, back to the regional park path between the soccer fields, to the restroom/water fountain at just before the four-mile mark. That's the entrée.

A quick scurry to the right over the footbridge, a sharp left into the deepest wooded part of a slightly different path, left across an even smaller footbridge into the open part of the main path, a gentle decline down for the final two miles, the last mile along the first mile that is the tree-shaded river path, a tenth of a mile marker all the way back. Dessert.

When I run the second half two minutes faster that the first, it's a good run. Whenever I run the long-incline laced first half at tempo pace and then the second half two minutes faster, it's a great run. Those runs are the after-dinner drink of choice.

Yesterday, I had a great run. Sufficiently fast to check the box. And, to share with you.