

Prepare for glory!

When I ask you who you are, you will respond in a loud and boisterous manner: **I am a Spartan!** Look at the Spartan on your right, look at the Spartan on your left – you will draw strength from him or her, and you will not let them fail. You will attack each and every obstacle. You will attack each and every difficulty. You will succeed, and you will conquer and not be conquered. No retreat. No surrender. Who are you? **I am a Spartan!** AROO, AROO, AROO! Release the runners!”

Thus the quest began on April 27 in Laurel, Ind., at an event called the Spartan Sprint, which is the shortest of a series of obstacle races in the Spartan Races. The Spartan Sprint was advertised as a 3+ mile event; however, if the mile markers on the course were correct, it turned out to be a 5+ mile endurance event. This technically made the 3+ mile advertisement accurate. The objective was to overcome adversities. The added distance was certainly an unexpected adversity.

Justice Steven David and I participated in the event. We had dinner at the same table on Tuesday, April 23, at a regional judges’ meeting in Jeffersonville, not knowing that each of us had signed on to the event. I don’t know how Justice David came to the decision to participate in the event, but I was issued a challenge by the real Spartan in our family, my 17-year-old son, Nicholas, who ran across the event while researching Greek history. He asked me to view the website and suggested he and some of his friends would like to participate. He challenged me to consider it, but he was concerned that I couldn’t or wouldn’t finish or get hurt or die along the way. In an attempt to maintain my status as alpha male of our clan,



Fit to Practice

I obviously could not let this challenge pass without a battle. Right before we were released to begin the trek, Nicholas turned to me, smiled and said, “Don’t die out there old man!” I replied, “I’ll wait for you at the finish line.” The challenge between young and old was on. I started to recruit team members for the Salem Spartans. I was looking for warriors and/or athletes that would show that mental toughness and perseverance could overcome raw strength and youth. During the race I discovered it took strength, focus, perseverance and sometimes assistance from other Spartans to complete the challenge. There were 7- and 8-foot walls to scale; large stones to lift, pull and carry; mud and barbed wire to crawl through uphill; muddy water; distances to traverse (sometimes while weighted down); and fire and gladiators waiting to thwart and beat you at the finish line.

On Wednesday, April 24, I was getting pretty anxious, awaiting our official start time and race day logistics. The details arrived via the Internet at approximately 6:30 p.m. I discovered that all participants were listed along with their ages. I started to look for participants my age or older and discovered there were very few, so I became even more anxious. As I was going through the list I discovered: David Steve M 56 11:15 a.m.

And I thought, “Is it possible that this is our Supreme Court Justice David?” The next day I left a message at the Court and the Judicial Center. Jane Siegel (who always provides help and assistance) contacted me and confirmed that it was, in fact, our Justice David and put me in contact with

him (he was still on the road on Court business). Before the race we exchanged good wishes, and afterward we exchanged stories of obstacles for which we had to pay the penalty (the penalty for failing to overcome an obstacle was 30 burpees, which is a combination of a squat, a push-up and a vertical jump), pain, cuts, abrasions, bruises and ultimately success.

The Spartan Race website (www.spartanrace.com) states that “[a]n obstacle course race is designed to test your resilience, strength, stamina, quick decision-making skills, and ability to laugh in the face of adversity.” Sounds like the legal profession or law school, doesn’t it?

Justice David finished the course in 1:45:28, placing 4th in our age group and 759th overall, and I finished in 2:30:06, placing 18th in our age group and 3,074th overall. Perhaps that is some indication as to why he is a Supreme and I am a trial court judge in a small town. Regardless, I am proud of the work I do and the work of all my brothers and sisters in the judiciary along with our dedicated support teams.

The site further states, “We want to own obstacle racing, and our unique obstacle course trail races will demand every ounce of your strength, ingenuity and animal instinct.” I concur, and although I cannot speak for the Hon. Spartan Justice David, he called me early Monday morning, and from our conversation, I would suggest even though he has encountered other obstacle courses while fulfilling his duty and obligations to Uncle Sam in the United States Army, he would AFFIRM my analysis. ⚖️

Footnote: My kid beat me by 28 minutes.

– Hon. Larry W. Medlock
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