

Blind Florida Runner Completes 19.3-Mile Challenge at Disney Wine & Dine Half Marathon Weekend

Walter Beckman from Pensacola, Fla., completed Lumiere's Two Course Challenge –running the 10K and the half marathon – at the Disney Wine & Dine Half Marathon Weekend presented by MISFIT, despite being completely blind. Beckman, 29, lost his sight five years ago when an arteriovenous malformation (AVM) in his brain ruptured and damaged his optic nerve.

Despite maintaining a rigorous fitness routine as a member of the Army Reserves before losing his sight, Beckman's weight increased dramatically – as high as 360 pounds – while he struggled to come to grips with being blind. But after about two years, he started running again, which helped him regain confidence in his ability to do anything. As a result, he has lost more than 70 pounds.

Over the weekend, Beckman completed the 10K (6.2 miles) and the half marathon (13.1 miles) with the assistance of a guide, his longest races since losing his eyesight.