

RUNNING SHORTS

Running hills is actually good for you

By Ken Johnson

Huntsville has plenty of hills. That can be good or bad, depending on your perspective. As runners, we complain about the hills and many of us try to avoid them when we are out on our training runs.

Actually, running hills makes you stronger, faster and healthier. Running hills on a regular basis will improve your leg strength, quicken your stride, expand your stride length and improve your cardiovascular system. Running hills is a form of resistance training. It will strengthen your hamstrings, calves, glutes, hip flexors and Achilles tendons.

Competitive runner, Mihaela Mullin of Kingwood, comes up to Huntsville on a regular basis just to run the hills in the avenues. Much of the success of the Huntsville Half Marathon, held each October, can be attributed to the flatland runners from the Houston area running the race to get in some hill training.

Rather than complain, Huntsville runners should feel lucky to be in an area with so many hills. Take advantage of your fortune. Run the hills at Huntsville State Park, Bowers Blvd, 7th street, Avenue O or the steepest hill in Huntsville, the south end of Robinson Way in the avenues.

Recent race results:

Austin Marathon (26.2 miles), Feb. 14

Melvin Neeley, 53	4:12:45
Lindsey North, 25	4:24:39
Timothy Dubbs, 51	5:51:48
Ken Johnson, 68	5:55:00

Half Marathon (13.1 miles)

Greg Peter, 54	2:02:03
Jessica Payne, 32	2:05:17
Stephanie Brock, 30	2:46:57
Joel Ahumada, 24	3:28:50
Melissa Asbury, 41	3:28:50

5K (3.1 miles)

Lyndsi Ayers, 23	28:42
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Surfside Beach Marathon (26.2 miles), Feb. 13

Ken Johnson, 68	6:12:52
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Run the Woodlands 5K, The Woodlands, Feb. 13

Fernando Gonzalez, 27	18:20
Robert Duncan, 50	20:02

Rocky Raccoon 50-Miler, Huntsville State Park, Feb. 6

Felix Montelongo, 33 8:36:08

Gerald Peters, 40 12:19:25

Willis Wildkat 5K, Willis, Feb. 6

Robert Duncan, 50 18:48 (1st in age group)

Ben Johnson, 26 29:03 (1st in age group)

Scott Mclatchy, 40 29:21 (3rd in age group)

Don Ortloff, 64 30:14 (3rd in age group)

Ken Johnson, 68 30:14 (1st in age group)

Upcoming Huntsville races:

Feb. 28 – **Sweetheart 5K and 1-Mile Run/Walk**, Bowers Stadium parking lot.

Mar. 28 – **Run the Trails**, 3.5-mile non-competitive run or walk at Huntsville State Park.

For more about these and other races in the area, visit the Seven Hills Running Club web site at <http://www.7hills.us> and click on Race Schedule.