

RUNNING SHORTS

Tips to start a running program and keep it going

By Ken Johnson

While some other sports compete well with running for achieving and maintaining physical fitness, running is the most convenient. You do not have to join a team, purchase special equipment, pay a membership fee or find a facility to run. You can run about anywhere at anytime and you do not need special equipment. The problem for many who start an exercise program is that they start and then use excuses to return to their comfort zone of no exercise. The local health clubs are packed with newcomers in January and then they fade away. If you are going to start a running program to improve your fitness, here are some tips to get started and keep it going:

1. Buy yourself a good pair of running shoes. Visit a running shoe store and have an experienced sales person help you find the right shoe for you.
2. Set goals for yourself. Maybe you want to run for 30 minutes a day, 3 days a week. Another goal might be to run a 5K (3.1 miles) race, a 10K or even a marathon (26.2 miles). Build up to your goal. Once you have achieved it, set new goals for yourself.
3. Let your family and friends know what your goals are. Solicit their support and encouragement, just as you would if you were attempting to quit smoking or lose weight.
4. Don't make up excuses for not running, especially weather and time. Everyone has a preference for running weather. If you limit yourself to ideal weather, you will not run very often. Make running a priority and you will find the time.
5. Join a group, whether it is a running club or a group of friends who share in your goals and who are willing to run with you. Mutual support is a strong motivator.
6. Subscribe to Runner's World, Running Times or Inside Texas Running or their web sites. These publications are loaded with helpful information about running. There is a link to these and many more publications on the Seven Hills Running Club web site, <http://www.7hills.us>
7. Get involved in the sport of running. This goes beyond just running. Work as a volunteer at a race or attend a race as a spectator.

Congratulations to the following Huntsville area runners who recently completed races:

Curtis Barton, 27, of Huntsville completed the East Texas Ultra 50K (31 miles) Trail Run at the Tyler State Park on February 10 in 6:30:22.

Five Huntsville area runners completed the Austin Marathon (26.2 miles) on February 18. They were Jerry Flanagan, 66, of Madisonville, 4:51:43, Len Hill, 53, of Huntsville, 4:44:08, Jan Parks, 50, of Point Blank, 4:54:18, Timothy Dubbs, 48, of Trinity, 4:54:18 and Kathleen Dubbs, 41, of Trinity. Two Huntsville runners completed the Austin Half Marathon, held in conjunction with the marathon. Ross Carrie, 42, completed the race in 1:41:05 and Katy Lampson, 31, in 2:29:22.

The 16th Annual Ramp Romp 5K (3.1 miles) was held at Kyle Field in College Station on February 24. This is a race up and down all the ramps at the stadium. Several Huntsville runners participated. Toby Dierksheide, 21:39, William Dierksheide, 21:40, Phillip Clark, 22:12, Christopher Wilson, 23:14, Ben Johnson, 26:25, John Cook, 26:47, Andrea Barrett, 31:28, Ken Johnson, 32:09 and Rosalyn Barrett, 36:56.

Also, on February 24, Amber Young, 23, of Huntsville ran the Rodeo 10K Run in Houston in a time of 1:13:00. Corrina Lawrence, 32, of Huntsville ran it in 1:16:00.

John Logan of Huntsville won the Sweetheart 5K Run in Huntsville on February 25 with a time of 20:34. Other Huntsville area runners completing the race were Robert Duncan, 20:44, David Dierksheide, 22:11, Toby Dierksheide, 23:47, Tucker Dierksheide, 24:46, Phillip Clark 24:56, Curtis Barton, 25:23, Christopher Wilson, 27:19, Jan Parks, 28:27, Marisa Padilla, 31:10 and True Cousins, 31:11.

Three Huntsville area runners completed the Spring Fever 5K in The Woodlands on March 3. They were Robert Duncan of Huntsville, 18:55, Jerry Flanagan of Madisonville, 24:57 and John Cook, 68, of Huntsville, 35:12.

The 1st Annual Armadillo Dash Half Marathon & 5K Run/Walk was held in College Station on March 4. Huntsville area runners were there in abundance. Ross Carrie, 42, of Huntsville ran the half marathon in 1:36:43. James Spencer, 26, of Huntsville, 1:37:12, Mark Rudis, 36, Madisonville, 1:44:45, John Cook, 51, of Huntsville, 2:07:43, Richard Grandy, 55, of Huntsville 2:05:25, Erin Ivison, 22, of Huntsville, 2:16:06, Candis Smith, 24, of Huntsville, 2:16:16 and Elizabeth Brown, 21, of Huntsville, 3:00:36. Completing the 5K race were Joel Shaw, 45, of Madisonville, 24:26. Irvin Harvey, 61, of Huntsville, 24:49 and Barbara Seholm, 58, of Huntsville, 52:06.

Questions or comments about running can be addressed to Ken Johnson at runner@isp.com or (936) 295-4291.