

RUNNING SHORTS

Houston Marathon switching to lottery system

By Ken Johnson

The Houston Marathon Committee recently announced a switch to a lottery system for entry into the Chevron Houston Marathon (26.2 miles) and Aramco Half Marathon (13.1 miles) to be held on January 30, 2011.

Both races were sold out for the last five years. For 2010, there were 11,000 entries available for each race (22,000 total). Online registration opened on July 17, 2009 and all 22,000 entries were sold out in less than 60 hours. There were thousands of runners who were not able to register and participate.

Under the new lottery system, anyone who wants to run the Houston Marathon or Half Marathon on January 30 must register online (houstonmarathon.com) between 6 a.m., July 27, and 11:59 p.m., August 12, 2010. A random selection system will be used and the 22,000 selected runners will be notified on August 17.

Veteran Houston Marathon runners (those who have completed the Houston Marathon 10 or more times) are exempted from the lottery system and may register on July 7. Two Huntsville-area runners hold veteran status.

Entry fees for both races have gone up for 2011. Entry into the Marathon will cost \$115 and entry into the Half Marathon will be \$95. Active duty and retired military personnel are eligible for a discount.

The El Paso Corporation 5K (3.1 miles) will also be held in Houston on the same day as the Marathon and Half Marathon, but entry into this race is not subject to the lottery system. Registration opens on the Houston Marathon web site on September 10.

The Huntsville area is always well-represented in all three races. If you want to participate in one of the three races on January 30, make sure you register on time.

There is also a time limit for completing each race. Marathon runners must finish within 6 hours, Half Marathon runners and walkers within 4 hours and 5K runners and walkers within 1 ½ hours.

Since the Houston Marathon Committee made the lottery system announcement a few days ago, many runners have complained to the media that the system is unfair to Texas runners and local Houston runners. Stay tuned to the Houston Marathon web site for any possible changes.

Recent race results:

Greyhound 5K (3.1 miles), Kosse, June 12

Ben Johnson, 26	30:48 (1 st in age group)
Ken Johnson, 69	33:48 (2 nd in age group)

June Bug 5K, Huntsville, June 12

Keegan Smith, 17	23:03
Sheridan Grant, 17	23:14
Justin Bickford, 23	24:17
Joshua Mizrany, 29	24:39
Steve Bickford, 49	24:48

Jerry McKee, 51	27:30
John Cook, 54	30:47
Roger Collins, 53	35:13
Mark Harris, 48	36:04
Alfredo Cerda, 38	36:04
Skipper Nethery, 61	40:32
Tracey McKee, 51	44:30
Ellyse Collins, 17	55:48
JoJo Ullrich, 49	60:20
Patsy Collins, 53	60:23

Sunday Night 5K, The Woodlands, June 6

Mary Turner, 22	35:01
Ken Johnson, 69	35:01

Upcoming Huntsville races:

July 31 - Dog Days 5K and 1-Mile Run/Walk, 8 a.m., Health & Kinesiology Center, Sam Houston State University campus. \$1 entry. Register at the starting point.

August 22 - Heat Wave 5K and 1-Mile Run/Walk, 8 a.m., Veterans Memorial Parkway, southwest corner of West Hills Mall parking lot. \$1 entry. Register at the starting point.