

## **RUNNING SHORTS**

### **The mental aspect of running**

By Ken Johnson

You do not have to be a psychiatrist to realize that there is a mental aspect of running. Some say it is just as important, if not more important, than the physical aspect.

The mental aspect starts with motivation and willpower. If you decide to run to achieve and maintain physical fitness, you have to be motivated and have the willpower to continue with a running program. Many start running, but quit before achieving the full benefit of the sport. In other words, their motivation and willpower is not strong enough to continue to meet the physical challenge of running.

To help with motivation, make sure that you fully understand the benefits of running and how the sport can improve your life and maybe lengthen your life. Without the understanding, you will not likely get very far with your running program. Make up your mind that you are going to run and do not let your busy schedule, minor injuries and less-than-ideal weather stop you from running. Of course, always check with your physician before starting a running program.

Even experienced runners are continually faced with the mental challenge of running. They are challenged with increasing their running distance and running speed. What motivated runners can accomplish is amazing. In 2006, Dean Karnazes of California ran 50 marathons (26.2 miles) in 50 days in 50 states. Norman Langwell of Huntsville lost 186 pounds and ran 5 marathons in 2008. Niki Bellnoski, 22, formerly of Huntsville, ran a 100-mile race in 2009.

Take challenges one step at a time. You do not have to run marathons to be a successful runner. Start with shorter runs, such as a 5K (3.1 miles). Walk it if you have to. The important thing is to get started, stay motivated and keep setting new goals.

Even while running a race, motivation is a factor. It is easy to quit; stay mentally strong and keep going. The body will follow the motivation. At the halfway point in a marathon, you are tired and you tell yourself mentally that there is no way you can run another 13.1 miles. Somehow, you keep going – and the physical strength is there to do it. The same thing may apply if you are running a 5K, 10K or some shorter distance. Regardless of the distance, train physically, but be prepared to handle the mental challenge.

#### **Recent race results:**

##### **Tejas Triathlon, Sugar Land, Jun 7**

(600-meter swim, 12-mile bike, 3-mile run)

Katy Lampson, 33, and team, 1:21:17 (3<sup>rd</sup> in female teams)

##### **Congress Ave. Mile, Austin, Jun 7**

Jesse Parker, 26      5:28

##### **Run the Woodlands 5K, Jun 13**

Robert Duncan, 49    19:03 (2<sup>nd</sup> place)

**Mud Maxx 5K, Humble, Jun 13**

(Untimed run with obstacles and mud)

Jessica Hatch, 27  
Keelie Hughes, 25  
Mary Sweeten, 26  
Ken Johnson, 68  
Ben Johnson, 25  
Mariah Reynolds, 24  
Jacob Gautreaux, 37  
Megan Gautreaux, 11

**Sunday Night 5K (3.1 miles), The Woodlands, Jun 14**

Ken Johnson, 68 34:41

**June Bug Run, Huntsville, Jun 20  
5K**

J. C. Guzman, 37 20:34  
Brian Zemlicka, 47 20:45  
James Spencer, 28 23:16  
John Slate, 53 23:33  
Curtis Barton, 30 26:41  
John Cook, 53 29:31  
Norman Langwel, 37 29:41  
Taylor Krischke, 11 30:35  
Mariah Reynolds, 24 31:12  
Leslee Cade, 38 31:44  
Lavonne Zaiontz, 41 32:15

**1-Mile**

Casey Spencer, 53 16:21  
Charles Walker, 32 17:43  
Jennifer Johnston, 30 17:43  
Patsy Collins, 50 20:47

**Sunday Night 5K, The Woodlands, Jun 21**

Mary Sweeten, 26 34:33

**Polish Pickle 5K, Bremond, Jun 27**

Adrienne Langelier, 26 18:10 (2<sup>nd</sup> female)  
J. C. Guzman, 37 20:02  
Allen Sparkman, 17 23:58  
Phillip Clark, 46 24:09  
Jerry Flanagan, 69 25:23 (2<sup>nd</sup> in age group)  
Doug Sparkman, 47 28:40  
John Cook, 53 29:11  
Ben Johnson, 25 32:35  
Mary Sweeten, 26 33:26

Ken Johnson, 68	35:38
Jennifer Johnston, 30	44:13
Charles Walker, 32	44:19
Karen Fowler, 33	44:53

**1-Mile**

Ben Flanagan, 4

Brendan Flanagan, 5

**Sugar Land Triathlon, Jun 28**

(300 meter swim, 10 mile bike, 3 mile run)

Jody Slaughter, 46 56:50

Micah Slaughter, 48 1:12:24