RUNNING SHORTS
Huntsville Half Marathon – an annual tradition
By Ken Johnson

Hundreds of runners from all over southeast Texas have counted on the Huntsville Half Marathon each October to help them train for the winter marathons, to include the Houston Marathon in January. The hills in Huntsville offer a special challenge for the "flatland runners" south of Huntsville. It's a race they love to hate.

This annual Huntsville tradition was initiated in 1978 by Jim Carter, Gene Pipes, Clyde Cauthen and Maxie Farris, who were members of the Pinetree Country Running Club in Huntsville. It began as the Huntsville Half & Quarter Marathon (13.1 and 6.55 miles, respectively) and for many years was held in conjunction with the Fair on the Square on the 1st Saturday of each October. In the early days, the race started on University Avenue near the downtown square and was on an out and back course, which included a stretch on Bearkat Blvd., Hwy. 19 and Old Phelps Road. There were few long distance races in southeast Texas and the Huntsville Half & Quarter Marathon was drawing 500-600 runners in its early days.

The women's basketball team at SHSU took over management of the race from 1985 thru 1989. After that, the SHSU track team, under Coach John Lumley, managed the race from 1990 thru 1996. During these years, the start and finish point was on the track at Bowers Stadium or in the parking lot below Bowers Stadium.

The Seven Hills Running Club, which had been formed in 1985, assumed management of the race in 1997. The start and finish line was changed to the Health & Kinesiology Center on the SHSU campus and a 5K (3.1 miles) race was added to attract more local runners. The 1997 race was marred by the death of Houston Police Officer, Gary L. Price, age 45, who suffered a massive heart attack on Avenue I, about a quarter mile from the finish of the half marathon. The quarter marathon race was dropped in 2000 and only the 5K race was held in 2001. The half marathon was brought back in 2002 and both the half marathon and 5K races have been held every year since. In recent years, the race has been moved to the 2nd or 3d Saturday of October due to the increased vehicle traffic on the course resulting from growth of the Fair on the Square on the 1st Saturday of October. Despite many new long distance races in southeast Texas in October, participation in the Huntsville Half Marathon & 5K Run/Walk has remained consistent at 400 to 500 runners and walkers.

Continued success of the race is largely attributed to the support of Rec Sports at SHSU, as well as the Huntsville Police Department, University Police Department and the many volunteers who help manage the race. The race would not be possible without the long-term commercial sponsorship of the North Lakes Pain Consultants of Huntsville (formerly the Pain Management Clinic).

Since 1996, proceeds from the race have benefited the Good Shepherd Mission and the SAAFE House in Huntsville. Last year, alone, a total of $3,000 was donated to these organizations.

The 29th Annual Huntsville Half Marathon and 5K Run/Walk will be held on Saturday, October 13, 2007. Entry forms are available at Iron Works, Nautilus and the Chamber of Commerce. On-line registration, a printable entry form and much more

information about the race are available on the Seven Hills Running Club web site at
http://www.7hills.us.
Recent Race Results:
Temple Sprint Triathlon, Temple, August 12
(350 meter swim, 9.1 mile bike, 2.1 mile run)
Liz Nestor   1:19:33 (1st place in 60-64 age group)
Anne Sigler   1:49:07 (1st place in 70-74 age group)

Heatwave 5K Run/Walk, Huntsville, August 25

J. C. Guzman	20:55
John Slate	22:38
Adrienne Langeliar	23:04
Katherine Castillo	23:37
Alex Mescall	24:17
Michael Deane	26:12
Norman Langwell	26:18
Christopher Wilson	28:08
Bernardo Vasquez	30:14
Edward Realzola	30:22
Lavonne Zaiontz	30:23
Chantel Langwell	40:17
True Cousins	40:17
Deanna Langwell	41:52
Martin Basa	47:05 (late start)