

## **RUNNING SHORTS**

### **Chip timing now the norm**

By Ken Johnson

Before chip timing, the most different task for any race director was to manually record the finish time for all runners and then sort it all out by gender and age group.

Chip timing arose in the early 90's and for years its use was limited to the very large races. Now, most races are chip timed.

What is chip timing? Every runner in a race is issued an electronic chip with a built-in transponder. Each chip is electronically coded with a 7-digit code. Chips come in different forms. Some are designed to be tied to shoe laces, others are worn around the ankle and others are attached to the back of the runner bib (race number). Some chips are disposable and others are collected at the finish line and reused.

The name, age, gender and assigned chip code for each runner is entered into a database and a computer is set up at the start/finish line.

A mat, with receiving antenna, is stretched across the start/finish line. When the starting gun goes off, the computer starts timing the race. As each runner crosses the starting line, the transponder in each runner's chip is read by the receiving antenna in the mat and the starting time is recorded for each runner.

When a runner crosses the finish line, the runner's finish time is recorded. The computer will provide two different times for the runner. The first is the "gun time." This is the time from when the starting gun went off to the time the runner crossed the finish line. The second is the "chip time." This is from when the runner crossed the starting line to when the runner crossed the finish line.

In large races, where it takes a long time for all runners to cross the starting line, there will be a significant difference between a runner's gun time and chip time.

The gun time is usually used to determine the overall winners. For age group awards, the chip time is usually used.

When the race is completed, the computer sorts out the runners, by gender, age group and finish time and printed race results are handed to the race director for the awards presentation. Typically, as the race is in progress, race results are posted in the finish area so runners can check on their time.

Chip timing is performed by race timing companies. They usually charge the race \$2.25 to \$3.25 per runner, depending on number of runners and the type of chip used. However, runners like chip timing and it makes race management a lot easier for the race director. It is more accurate than manual timing and complete results are made available just as soon as the race is over. Results are posted on the Internet, usually the same day as the race.

Without chip timing, the race results listed below would not be available until next month. Thank goodness for technology.

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

#### **Austin Marathon (26.2 miles), Feb. 17**

Timothy Dubbs, 54                      6:48:06

#### **Half Marathon (13.1 miles)**

Elaine Fritz, 21	1:41:43
Randy Kenyon, 20	2:05:16
Jessica Payne, 35	2:05:28
Everett Harrell, 43	2:09:46
Jericho Golez, 35	2:14:05
Charles Frazier, 79	3:31:57

**5K (3.1 miles)**

Reynaldo Lazario, Jr.	31:50
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**Rhythm & Blues Half Marathon, Houston, Feb. 10**

Doug Dretke, 54	2:11:42
Dee Dee Dretke, 52	2:27:33
Kristy Vienne, 35	2:27:38
Keith Ahee, 24	2:33:57
Christine Gann, 36	2:41:42

**5K**

Blaine Nokes, 21	44:03
James Bruce, 48	1:00:56
Jennifer Bruce, 40	1:00:57

**Love.Run.Marathon, Trail Run, Huntsville State Park, Feb. 9**

**Marathon**

Jacob Gautreaux, 40	3:14:11 (1st overall)
Ken Johnson, 71	6:59:34 (1st in age group)

**Half Marathon**

Jacqui Wukich, 29	1:55:06 (2nd in age group)
Jose Moreno, 51	2:00:19 (2nd in age group)
Scott McDonald, 49	2:05:48
Steve Allen, 40	2:09:17
James Bruce, 48	2:38:45
Ruth Stokes, 21	4:16:31

**10K (6.2 miles)**

Aaron McDonald, 15	51:31 (1st in age group)
Joan Williams, 25	57:58 (3rd in age group)
Donna Fabian, 38	59:53 (3rd in age group)
Gerald Johnson, 57	1:03:27 (1st in age group)
Kim Johnson, 39	1:04:44
Laura Yosko, 30	1:10:35
Amanda Nolin, 37	1:10:57
Sarah Barragan, 25	1:11:20
Connie Mathis, 41	1:20:06

**Love Your Heart 5K, New Braunfels, Feb. 2**

Rex Herklotz, 15	37:12
Esther Herklotz, 50	43:20

**Upcoming races in Huntsville:**

Feb. 24 - Sweetheart 5K & 1-Mile Run/Walk, Health & Kinesiology Center, SHSU

Mar. 2 – CASA 5K, Bowers Stadium Parking Lot

Mar. 23 – Run with the Lions, 10K, 5K, Health & Kinesiology Center, SHSU

Mar. 24 – Run the Trails, 3.5 Miles, Non-competitive, Huntsville State Park

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