

## RUNNING SHORTS

### What are modern runners wearing?

By Ken Johnson

Back in the 70's and early 80's when running started to become a popular sport for maintaining physical fitness, runners ran with general purpose sneakers and cotton clothing, from socks to shirts. On a hot day, the cotton clothing held the sweat and the runner weighed extra pounds when finishing a long run. Digital watches were in their infancy and when the stopwatch feature was added, it was a big deal.

All that seems crude by today's standards.

Now, runners wear shoes made specifically for running. They go to a running store to get tested and fitted to determine the right shoe for them. There are shoes for runners who overpronate, underpronate, are heavy, have flat feet, have high arches or who wear orthotics. There are shoes with gel and foam cushioning. The latest cushioning is compressed pellets. There are heavy shoes, light shoes, track shoes and trail shoes. There are also minimalist shoes which have virtually no support. They are one step up from barefoot running.

Running socks, shorts, T-shirts and caps are now made of 100% polyester dry-fit material. This material is designed to be cool, breathable and wick the moisture away from the body. This has made running attire a lot more comfortable, especially in hot weather. The dry-fit material also reduces chaffing.

Running socks are now made for each foot. To be up to date, your socks should be marked with a L and R.

Some runners now run with compression sleeves or compression socks up to the knees. These are made of elastic to fit tight around the lower legs. They are designed to reduce fatigue and increase circulation and oxygen flow in the body.

If running long distance, the modern runner is carrying a belt with their fuel supply. This will include some packets of gel (concentrated carbohydrates), electrolyte capsules, sport drinks and maybe water.

The modern runner is also equipped with the latest electronic gadgetry. They are probably carrying a cell phone, not only to take calls, but to play music through headphones (do not do this when running on the roads or anyplace where you have to be alert). Of course, their watch has been replaced by a GPS on their wrist. This will map their run, their time, speed, total distance and much more.

All the latest clothing and equipment that a runner may carry while running might make the sport more tolerable and may even improve performance. However, it still takes self-discipline and the will to achieve and maintain physical fitness to run on a regular basis.

#### Recent race results:

##### Watermelon Festival 5K, Hempstead, July 20

Steve Allen, 41      24:25

Ken Johnson, 72      38:04

##### Run the Woodlands 5K, The Woodlands, July 13

Steve Bickford, 52      23:40

Glenn Green, 51      28:19

Laura Green, 47 31:22  
Cathy Bickford, 51 33:42  
Ken Johnson, 72 38:52

**Sunday Night 5K, The Woodlands, July 7**

Leah Koester, 47 26:20  
Ken Johnson, 72 37:40

**Baytown Heat Wave 5-Miler, Baytown, July 4**

Gerald Johnson, 57 46:56  
Kristy Vienne, 36 47:51  
Kelly Bielamowicz, 38 53:07

**July 4 - Stu's Country Mile 5K, Centerville**

Steve Bickford, 52 23:36 (1st in age group)  
Steve Allen, 41 24:44 (1st in age group)  
Leah Koester, 47 25:07 (1st in age group)  
Donna Fabian, 38 26:09  
Jan Parks, 56 29:25 (2nd in age group)  
Jill Blake, 34 30:37  
Heidi Morse, 53 34:46  
Cathy Bickford, 51 36:18  
Ken Johnson, 72 38:44  
Jerry Flanagan, 73 48:09  
True Cousins, 79 49:46

**1-Mile**

Marilynn Johnson, 67 18:00  
Casey Spencer, 57 18:22

**Upcoming races in Huntsville:**

July 27 – Dog Days 5K & 1-Mile Run/Walk, Forest Hills Sub-division  
Aug. 10 – Carnage Classic, 4-Mile Mud Run, General Sam's Offroad Park  
Aug. 24 – Heat Wave 5K & 1-Mile Run/Walk, Spring Lake Sub-division

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.