RUNNING SHORTS
Getting to know running terminology
By Ken Johnson

Any sport or activity has its own terminology and running is no different.

First of all, what is the difference between a runner and a jogger? A runner is someone who runs and competes in races. A jogger is someone who just runs for exercise.

Streakers are runners (or joggers) who run at least one mile EVERY day. The U.S. Running Streak Assn. (runeveryday.com) maintains a list of streakers. The longest running streak in the U.S. is 46 years.

When doing training runs, you may do fartleks, which means that you vary your pace significantly during your run. Fartlek is a Swedish term meaning speed play. Or, you may do a tempo run, where you run at a steady pace around 70 to 80% of your max aerobic capacity.

Races are put on by various organizations, most of the time to raise money for a charity. The distance can be any distance set by the organizer. It can be in miles or kilometers. The most popular distance is 5K (5,000 meters or 3.1 miles). A marathon is always 26.2 miles. Any race longer than a marathon is referred to as an ultra-marathon.

Triathlons, duathlons and adventure races are multi-sport races, which include a running event.

Then, there are the relatively new non-traditional races. These include mud runs, color runs, where the participants are doused with colored powder, runs with obstacles and night-time colored light runs. Most are 5K and non-competitive.

If you run a race and get a PR, that means that you set a Personal Record for that race distance. On the other hand, a PW is a Personal Worst. A DNF means that you started a race and for some reason Did Not Finish. If for any reason you did not start the race, you get a DNS (Did not Start).

If you bonk or hit a wall during a race, that means your body ran out of carbohydrates and you ran out of energy. Traditionally, this occurs at 20 miles in a marathon. This can be avoided by taking gels, which contain concentrated carbohydrates. Gels come in small packets, which can be carried during the race and taken with water.

Most races recognize the overall male and female winner and then the top three in age groups. Age groups are determined by the race organizer. There may be separate competition for Clydesdales and Athenas/Fillies (males and females over a specified body weight).

Some races are chip-timed. This means that an electronic timing system is being used. Each runner wears a "chip" attached to their shoe or on the back of their race number (bib). When the runner crosses the finish line, a wire under a rubber mat reads a code in their chip. This is fed into a computer at the finish line. The computer records their finish time and sorts out the race results by sex and age group. Complete race results are immediately available after the race.

There are two times produced for each runner. The first is the gun time. Gun time is from when the starting gun goes off to when a runner crosses the finish line. Chip time (or net time) is from when a runner crosses the start line until the runner crosses the

finish line. The chip time is used to determine age group winners. In a large race where it takes a long time for all the runners to cross the start line, the difference between gun time and chip time can be significant.

Whether you are a runner or a jogger or know the terminology, the important thing is that you are participating in a great sport that will help you stay healthy.

Recent race results:

Glowing in the Night, 2.75 miles, Emory, June 13
Steve Allen, 43   19:22

Wounded Warrior 5K, Las Colinas, June 13
Donna Fabian, 40   23:58

Greyhound 5K, Kosse, June 13
Ken Johnson, 74   37:50

Sunday Night 5K, The Woodlands. June 7
Donna Fabian, 40   23:49
Julia Buck, 30   26:56
Ken Johnson, 74   37:03

Wellness 5K, Houston, June 7
Ken Johnson, 74   37:37

Heights 5K, Houston, June 6
Bob Barnhill, 68   27:55
Ken Johnson, 74   37:34

Upcoming races in Huntsville:
June 20 – June Bug 5K, 1-Mile, Spring Lake Sub-division
June 21 – Gator Bait Trail Run, 15K, 5K, Huntsville State Park
July 25 – Dog Days 5K, 1-Mile, Iron Works #2 (old Nautilus)

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.