

RUNNING SHORTS

Obey the laws and be extra careful when running roads

By Ken Johnson

With school back in session, there will be more traffic on the roads. That makes safe road running more challenging.

Obey the laws and be extra careful. There is nothing that will hurt your running program or ruin your day more than being struck by a vehicle.

You are considered a pedestrian when you are running on the roads and you are required to follow the laws pertaining to pedestrians. Most of these are Texas laws, so they apply in the city and on rural roads.

Here are the main laws that apply to runners: 1) If there is a sidewalk, you are required to run on the sidewalk. If there is no sidewalk, you must run on the left side of the road facing oncoming traffic. 2) When crossing the road, you must use a marked cross-walk if one is available. No "jay running." When using a marked cross-walk, you have the right-of-way, provided you have a green light or vehicles approaching in your lane have enough time to come to a stop for their red light. When a marked cross-walk is not available, vehicles have the right-of-way. 3) If you arrive at a 4-way stop before a vehicle does, you have the right-of-way. 4) If you are running on a sidewalk or on the road facing oncoming traffic and a vehicle comes out of a driveway or parking lot, you have the right-of-way. This also applies to vehicles stopping and making a right turn on a red light. You have the right-of-way.

In situations where you have the right-of-way, it is safe to proceed only if the vehicle driver sees you and yields the right-of-way to you. Keep in mind that many drivers are distracted by use of electronic devices.

While not required by law, here is additional advice for safe road running: 1) Do not wear headphones. 2) Be aware of your surroundings and avoid areas where you sense danger. 3) If you are running in an area where you may encounter loose dogs, carry pepper spray. 4) If you are running with a group, run single file. 5) Always carry some form of identification with you.

You have the option of running at the track or on the trails at Huntsville State Park, but it is okay to run on the roads. Just be safe.

Recent race results:

Pikes Peak Ascent Trail Run (13.32 miles), Colorado Springs, CO, Aug. 16

Jason Wallace, 39 3:49:21

XTERRA Cameron Park 21K (13 miles), Waco, Aug. 16

Steve Allen, 42 2:41:26

Kingwood Park Melon Run, 5K, Kingwood, Aug. 16

Donna Fabian, 40 25:36

Watermelon Run for the Fallen 5K, Untimed, Hempstead, Aug. 16

Jill Blake, 35

Kelly Bielamowicz, 39

Ken Johnson, 73

Run the Woodlands 5K, The Woodlands, Aug. 9

Steve Bickford, 53	24:00
Morgan Ashworth, 26	32:27
Gene Gaskins, 55	34:26
Cathy Bickford, 52	36:01

Blues Capital of Texas 5K, Navasota, Aug. 9

Art Morgan, 48	22:12
Robert Morgan, 18	25:50
John Pierce, 39	26:03
Denise Morgan, 46	30:19
Ken Johnson, 73	34:18

Upcoming races in Huntsville:

August 23 – Heat Wave 5K and 1-Mile, Waterwood Sub-division

September 27 – Fall Fun Run, 10K, 5K, 1-Mile, Physical Therapy Associates, behind hospital.

October 4 – Dye for Dogs 5K, New Waverly

October 4 – CASA Superhero 5K, Bowers Stadium

October 18 – Huntsville Half & Quarter Marathon & 5K Run/Walk, SHSU campus.

November 1 – Rocky Raccoon 50K, 25K, 10K Trail Run, 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.