

RUNNING SHORTS

Major races coming to Huntsville in February

By Darren Grant

Fall in Huntsville is fantastic for running--great weather, good races, activity everywhere.

The first major race of the season was the Texas 10 Huntsville, held on September 24. About 300 runners turned out to compete in three distances: 10 mile, 5 mile, and 5K. The fastest local finishers in the signature ten miler were Dan Byrne, in 1:12:18, and Julie Davis, in 1:18:00.

That was followed by the Huntsville Half Marathon, Quarter Marathon, and 5K Run/Walk, held on October 28. In the Half Marathon, Davis was again the fastest local ladies' finisher, at 1:44:46, along with overall men's winner Dominic Hayes, in 1:22:32. Hayes' achievement is particularly noteworthy, as he is a student at SHSU, with all that that entails.

Two major races will be coming to Huntsville State Park this winter. The Rocky Raccoon Trail Run takes place over the weekend of Feb. 3-4. This race is for people who want to combine the strain of running one hundred miles with the excitement of tripping over roots on the trails in the park. The race day entry fee is a mere \$250, so start saving now.

My daughter and I helped out at this race a few years ago, staffing the 83-mile rest station on a cold winter night. We made hot chocolate and warm potato soup for the runners to enjoy. You haven't seen tired until you've seen someone stagger into your rest station after running 83 miles in a row. Over two hundred runners from around the country will line up on the morning of Feb. 3 to do just that, and more.

If 100 miles is too much for you, wait two weeks and then come out for the Love Run Half-Marathon, held on Feb. 17. Always well-received by those who participate, a 10K is available as well.

But if 100 miles isn't enough, then the Ragnar Relay is for you. A team from Walker County, the Seven Hills RC Trailblazers, conquered this 124-mile, Hill Country trail run in October. Jessica Twardeski, Hope de Los Santos, Gretchen Dixon, Hannah Gerber, Carlos Parra, Tammy Hodges, Cindy Pate, and Angelina Santos emerged tired but triumphant after a mere 33 hours, 37 minutes, and 27 seconds. Talk about stamina.

(Ken Johnson compiles the "Recent Race Results" section of this column. Please send your race results to him at 1941runner@sbcglobal.net.)

Recent race results:

Santa Hustle Half Marathon (13.1 miles), Galveston, Dec. 17

Ken Johnson, 76 3:05:23

5K (3.1 miles)

Marilynn Johnson, 72 1:05:45

12K (7.4 miles) of Christmas, Houston, Dec. 16

Jeffrey Johnson, 61 1:14:10

Gretchen Dixon, 40 1:14:53

BCS Marathon (26.2 miles), College Station, Dec. 10

Kenneth Matej, 53 6:18:31

Half Marathon

Julie Davis, 38 1:49:32
Ray Sarno, 70 3:05:44
Ken Johnson, 76 3:10:51

Reindeer 5K, Lufkin, Dec. 9

Ken Johnson, 76 38:07

Angels Run, 10K, Conroe, Dec. 9

Steve Bickford, 56 49:22

Upcoming races in Huntsville:

January 1 – New Years Resolution Run, 10K, 5K, 1-Mile, Physical Therapy Associates

January 20 – Frost Your Fanny, 5K, 1-Mile, Spring Lake Sub-division

February 3-4, Rocky Raccoon 100-Mile Trail Run, Huntsville State Park

February 10 – Rocky Raccoon 50-Mile and 50K Trail Runs, Huntsville State Park

February 17 – Love.Run Half Marathon and 10K Trail Runs, Huntsville State Park

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