

RUNNING SHORTS

It's never too late to start running

By Darren Grant

Age and running have a complicated relationship. Years ago, in my twenties, I used to clean up at local races. The secret wasn't that I was particularly fast—merely that few people in their twenties ran races. They were too busy. When there are only three people in your age group, you can't help but place!

The age groups that get really crowded are the 40s and 50s. It has always been this way. As family responsibilities subside, it is easier to find time to get outside and exercise. Here in Huntsville, I've enjoyed watching these new runners come in with fresh legs and terrific attitudes, and eventually leave me in the dust.

You see, "fresh legs" could have described me thirty years ago, in my twenties, when I was winning all those age group awards! Now it is a different story entirely. With all the pounding they've endured, my legs now need two days of rest for each day of running. On my off days, I maintain my exercise schedule by biking or walking.

But plenty of people remain blazing fast well into their 40s and 50s. It is not unusual to see someone that age win a race outright, and not at all unusual for those age group winners to outpace the winners of younger age groups.

These days, plenty of people are running into their seventies and beyond. At last year's Huntsville Half Marathon, Quarter Marathon, and 5K, for example, local runner Ken Johnson finished the Half at the age of 75, while Barbara Chenette of Latexo finished the 5K at the age of eighty.

Still, as my friend Skipper Nethery has pointed out, there is a trend in our area toward having more younger runners. You can see this in my neighborhood, Forest Hills, where stalwart runners such as Nethery, Jennifer Langley, and myself have been joined by many new runners in their teens and twenties. You can see it at races, too.

The bottom line is this: any age is a good age to start running!

(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:

Cotton Harvest Festival 5K, Cooper, Oct. 14

Steve Allen, 45 21:23

Blackwater Draw 5K, Bryan, Oct. 14

Steve Bickford, 56 23:14

Kayleigh Pursley, 26 36:46

Cathy Bickford, 56 37:11

Shiitake 5K, Madisonville, Oct. 14

Gabriel Coleman, 17 19:11

Brandon Harrison, 30 19:27

Julie Davis, 38 21:23

Darren Grant, 52 24:33

Kendall Campbell, 10	24:36
David Guevara, 12	28:30
Luis Guevara, 11	35:40
Marsie Grant, 55	37:55
David Keithly, 35	44:46
Ashlea Zadakis, 26	44:47

10 for Texas, The Woodlands, Oct. 14

10 Miles

Dan Byrne, 59	1:09:08
Melvin Neely, 61	1:26:02
Scottie Ward, 27	1:26:08
Dana Formon, 29	1:39:31
Nathan Gillmore, 24	1:42:57
Katie Gillmore, 25	1:42:57
Pamela Walton, 62	1:45:11
Lisa Black, 39	2:07:01

5K

Abby Jones, 20	37:11
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Stesti Brewing 5K Trail Run, Lovelady, Oct. 14

Ken Johnson, 76	45:38
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Buffalo Stampede, Bryan, Oct. 14

Half Marathon (13.1 miles)

Greg Oberg	2:21:01
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5K

Jackie Wallace	23:42
Kenzie Pruitt	27:27

Space City 10-Miler, Houston, Oct. 8

Dan Byrne, 59	1:11:03
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Texas 10 Series, Cypress, Oct. 8

10 Miles

Steve Allen, 45	1:18:43
Steve Bickford, 56	1:22:45
Angelina Santos, 52	1:24:41
Patrick Lewis, 52	1:29:38
Sharon Valles, 44	1:44:32
Cindy Pate, 57	2:15:24
Ken Johnson, 76	2:23:13

5 Miles

Cathy Bickford, 56	1:05:10
Ray Sarno, 70	1:05:16
Dianna Sarno, 55	1:05:16

Upcoming races in Huntsville:

October 22 – Race for the Cure 5K

October 28 – Huntsville Half & Quarter Marathon & 5K, Walker Co. Fairgrounds

November 23 – Elkins Lake Turkey Trot, 5K.

November 25 – Leftover Turkey Run, 10K, 5K, 1-Mile, Physical Therapy Associates

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.