

RUNNING SHORTS

Houston Marathon modifies lottery system for entry

By Ken Johnson

Last month, it was announced that entry into the Chevron Houston Marathon (26.2 miles) and the Aramco Half Marathon (13.1 miles) to be held on January 30, 2011, will be by a lottery system. Veterans (863 runners who have completed the Houston Marathon 10 or more times) are exempted from the lottery system. There is a cap of 11,000 runners for each race. Anyone wanting to run either of these races will have to sign up for the lottery between July 27 and August 12 and the winners will be announced on August 17.

After that announcement, numerous complaints were made through the media that the lottery system would be unfair to Houston-area runners and to runners who were nearing Veteran status.

Modifications to the lottery system have since been announced.

First, runners who have completed the Houston Marathon 5 to 9 times (3,202 in this category) are also exempted from the lottery system and can register from July 27 to August 12. Huntsville runners in this group include James Carter, Doug Dretke, Melvin Neely and Jerry Flanagan.

Secondly, 500 Houston Area Road Runners Association (HARRA) members can obtain an entry into the marathon or half marathon without going through the lottery system. The HARRA web site (<http://www.harra.org>) includes instructions and criteria for distribution of these 500 entries.

The only other way to avoid the lottery system is through the Heroes Program. Donate at least \$350 to one of the designated charities and pay your marathon or half marathon entry fee. A limited number of these entries will be available, starting July 27.

So, if you want to run the marathon or half marathon on January 30 and are not exempted from the lottery system, you need to sign up for the lottery between July 27 and August 12. The web site is <http://www.chevronhoustonmarathon.com>.

The EP 5K (3.1 miles) is held in conjunction with the marathon and half marathon. Entry into this race is not subject to the lottery system.

The Huntsville area was well-represented in last year's race; 9 runners completed the marathon, 13 completed the half marathon and 8 completed the 5K.

Good luck to Huntsville area runners in the lottery system and in your training program to prepare for these races.

Recent race results:

Live, Love, RUN 5K (3.1 miles), Diboll, July 10

Ben Johnson, 26 30:20 (2nd in age group)

Ken Johnson, 69 33:30 (1st in age group)

Run the Woodlands 5K, The Woodlands, July 10

Fernando Gonzalez, 27 19:36

Robert Duncan, 50 20:10

Jerry Flanagan, 70 29:12

Upcoming races in Huntsville

July 31 – Dog Days 5K & 1-Mile Run/Walk

August 21 – Heat Wave 5K & 1-Mile Run/Walk

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