

Ridge Rider Athletic Club

The Tourister

April 2007

Our mission is to promote fitness, health and competition throughout Northeast Arkansas.

Racing Facts

- You must wear your ChampionChip on your shoe. It will not register from your pocket or another location.
- Pin your Bib number on the front of your body.

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ChampionChip Time

RRAC has obtained a ChampionChip timing system. When receiving your race packet, you will find an envelope that contains a ChampionChip and a secure tie attachment strap. You must attach the ChampionChip in this envelope to your shoe. Please verify that your Bib Number you received and the ID Number on the ChampionChip matches the numbers found on top of this envelope. If they do not match, please go to the trouble area to have it corrected. The ChampionChip attaches to your shoelaces using the Se-

cure-A-Tie. To attach the ChampionChip, insert the small end of the plastic tie through the larger opening of the chip (wing) from the top going down. Then slip the plastic tie



Attach the chip on your shoe as shown.

under your shoelaces and pull the tie back up through the other side of the chip. Insert the small

end of the tie into the larger opening of the connector. Now pull on the tie end until snug. **AT THE FINISH LINE: REMEMBER, YOU MUST RETURN YOUR CHIP AT**

THE FINISH LINE. FAILURE TO DO SO WILL PREVENT YOU FROM REGISTERING FOR CHAMPIONCHIP EVENTS IN FUTURE YEARS PLUS YOU WILL BE ASSESSED A \$35 CHARGE FOR YOUR CHIP IF IT'S NOT RETURNED.

For more information or questions, please contact Jim Stearns.

Good News!

Congratulations to RRAC's **Blair Dean**. Blair recently won over-all female in the Hogeye Marathon earlier this month.

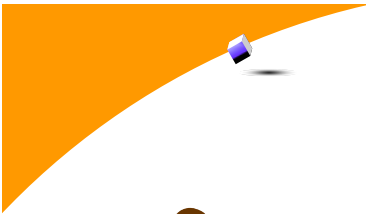
RRAC's **Shanda Rogers** also placed in the Hogeye Half-Marathon.

Micha Felkins and Shanda Rogers will travel to Boston to run the Boston Marathon this month. Good luck girls, and have fun!

In the recent Germantown Half Marathon, John Wilbanks won his age group, and Chris Cone

placed 5th in his age group. Other RRAC finishers: Jim Stearns and Bobbi Fowler.

John Elliott won his age group in the Mayor's Cup 5K in Germantown the same day.



2 million Americans have plantar fasciitis.

Fight Your Arch Enemy

Do your dogs start barking when you finish a pavement-pounding run? You could be one of the 2 million Americans with plantar fasciitis ... tears in the tissue that runs along the sole of your foot, causing pain in your heel and arch.

But, a new exercise can relieve foot pain and speed healing, according to a study in the

Journal of Bone & Joint Surgery. Researchers had 82 patients do either the traditional Achilles tendon stretch or the new move, called the plantar fascia stretch, three times daily for 8 weeks. Those who did the new move had much less pain, because, it turns out, this stretch targets the plantar fascia more directly.

To do it, cross the ankle of your sore foot over your opposite knee while sitting. Pull your toes back toward your shin until you feel a stretch in the arch. Hold for 10 seconds, release, and repeat 10 times. Do three sets a day.

April RRAC Meeting will be Tuesday, 6 PM, April 10th at the YMCA.

Wilkie to Address RRAC

Jonesboro's Parks & Recreation Director, Jason Wilkie, will be the guest speaker of the April 2007 RRAC meeting. The meeting will begin at 6 PM, Tuesday, April 10th at the YMCA. Refreshments will be served. Please make plans to attend.



www.ridgerider.org

For complete results on all Series races, past newsletters, registration forms, membership applications, and much more ... please visit www.ridgerider.org today!



www.ridgerider.org



Riding in Groups

Whether you're touring, training or just exploring country roads, riding with friends can add a lot of fun to your bicycling. With clubs like RRAC, you can meet people and share information about routes, equipment and bicycling events.

In addition, athletically inclined bicyclist often push themselves harder and improve more when training together.

But, you can spoil the fun if you run into one of your companions. Bike to bike

crashes are just as common as car to bike crashes, so it's a good idea to give some attention to safe group riding.



The Safety Cocoon

Imagine a "cocoon" of space around each bicycle in your group of riders. It's easy to think that you can safely pass closer to a bicycle than a car, because the bicycle is smaller. But the bicycle can turn to the side just as fast as a car. Keep 3 feet of clearance when you're passing another bicyclist - more at high downhill speeds.

At any time, one of your riding companions might be about to pass you, so be

especially careful to ride in a straight line. You don't have eyes in the back of your head, and you can't constantly trace the position of bicyclist behind you as you ride.

When you're about to pass another bicyclist, it's your responsibility to do it safely. The other members of your group can't read your mind to know that you are about to change position in the group. Check behind you before you change your land posi-

tion. Call out, "On your left" to the bicyclist you're passing, and pass on the left.

Never sneak past another bicyclist on the right - if you do, you force the other bicyclist farther toward the middle of the road without warning.

When you're about to pass another bicyclist, it's your responsibility to do it safely.

Riding Side By Side

Bicyclist often like to ride side by side so they can talk with each other. Riding two abreast is legal in most places. It's okay on a straight, flat road. There, drivers can see you from behind, and you can usually see or hear them approach.

Side-by-side bicyclists occupy a whole lane. On a multilane road with light traffic, cars can pass in the next lane. On a narrow road or with heavier traffic, be cour-

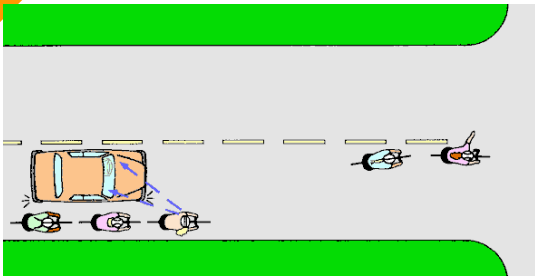
teous! Don't make drivers wait for you. Pull into a single line well before cars can reach you. It takes only one thoughtless rider out to the left of the group to endanger the whole group. Call out, "Car back" to let the group know it's time to single up.

A rear-view mirror helps you to check on the cars behind you. With a mirror, you can ride side by side more often and still pull back into a single line to let the cars

pass you. Never ride side by side on a hilly or winding road. Don't make yourself into a last-moment surprise to a motorist coming around a curve or over a hilltop.



Interacting with Other Road Users



“Snaking” across a lane, the cyclist can allow the passing car to make its right turn, while they turn left. Each cyclist looks back before crossing the lane.

Some bicyclists fall for a “herd instinct” when riding in groups - as if the group protected them, or there’s nobody else on the road besides the group. It’s tempting to play “follow the leader” in a group of bicyclists - tempting but dangerous.

When preparing a lane change or turn, you must look out for yourself. It can be safe for the bicyclist ahead of you to change lane position, but not safe for

you, since cars or other bicyclists could be approaching from the rear. You must look back for them just the same as when you ride alone. Look left, right, and left again for traffic at stop signs - don’t follow the rider ahead of you into an intersection.

The only exception is in a tightly organized, small group that moves completely as a unit. The first and last riders are understood to be on the lookout for the entire group. Don’t count on this service unless it’s understood in advance.

When crossing lanes, a line of

bicyclists should “snake” across, one at a time, each rider in turn. This way, you leave a safe passage for cars. A ragged line of bicyclists blocks the entire lane.

Make a neat, straight line when waiting at intersections. Group of bicyclists who pile up at intersections block the road. This practice is unnecessary, discourteous and dangerous.

When you stop to rest, to read your map or to wait for companions, pull completely off the road. It’s surprising how many bicyclists fail to observe this simple caution.

Drafting and Paceline Riding

When you ride close behind another bicyclist, you don’t have to work as hard. The bicyclist in front of you serves as a windbreak, reducing your air resistance. Experienced bicyclists take advantage of this effect, drafting each other in a paceline.

In a paceline, each bicyclist works hard for a little while at the front, and then drops back to the rear along the left side of the line of riders. Large groups may ride in two lines side by side - a double paceline, with the leaders dropping back along the outside, right and left.

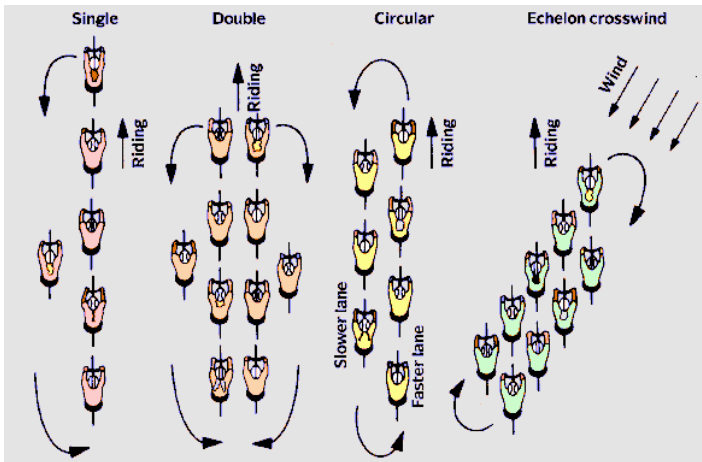
A well-coordinated paceline is poetry in motion, but drafting is always a little

risky. To take advantage of the windbreak effect, you must follow the rider ahead of you closely; but you must never let your front wheel overlap that rider’s rear wheel. If the wheels touch,

Everyone in a paceline must ride smoothly, with no quick breaking or swerving. Look past the rider in front of you: Don’t stare at his or her rear wheel. Try to anticipate the moves the lead rider will make. The lead rider should announce road hazards: “Glass,” “Dog right,” “Car up,” and maneuvers: “Slowing,” “Left turn.” The last rider should announce “Car back” when a car is about to pass the group.

Hand signals aren’t a good idea in a tight paceline group - it’s more important to keep both hands on the handlebars.

When you pull in behind another rider to draft, call out “On your wheel” so he or she will know you are there.



you suddenly can’t balance and you’ll almost certainly take a quick, hard fall. Other riders behind you may land on top of you. Ride in a paceline only if you’ve developed good control over your bike, and you know that the other bicyclists can also manage the situation safely.

Four types of pacelines. The two at the left are relatively easy, but the two at the right require a well-coordinated group of expert riders.

Racing

There's a major exception to these rules or cooperation: In a mass-start road race, riders often swerve deliberately to make it hard for others.

Meanwhile, other riders lurk behind, drafting each other until the final minutes when they sprint all-out for the

finish line. The tactics of a race - drafting and solo sprints, cooperation and competition - make it exciting for the racers and spectators.

But leave this kind of excitement for the racers. When riding in a group, focus on cooperation, not

competition. Relax and enjoy your ride!



There is a major exception to the rules of cooperation.

Summary

Group riding can add a new dimension to your bicycling. Except in the special situations of the paceline or mass-start race, the rules of the road apply to you with other bicyclist just as they do

with motorists. Remember to keep the safety cocoon around you, be predictable, and don't follow another bicyclist into a dangerous situation. The rewards of increased enjoyment of

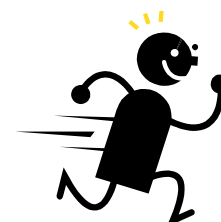
bicycling with others are well worth the extra attention.

RRAC Series Events



Date	Event Description	Contact
April 14	PT Fit for Life 5K	raldridge@astate.edu
April 28	Jonesboro Jets Swim Team 5K	jstroud@jonesboro.org
May 19	Loose Caboose 5K	ftoler@paragould.com
June 2	Gary Schuchardt 5K Trail	Melanie Polsgrove
June 9	Flat as a Pancake 5K	arkrecords@sbcglobal.net
July 4	Freedom 5K	jstroud@jonesboro.org
July 28	Sensational Kids 5K	bccraine@sbcglobal.net
August 10	Hot Summer Nights 4 Miler	jstearns@sbrmc.org
September 8	The Blessed Sacrament 5K	angela@relativityinc.com
Spetember 22	Turtle Creek Civitan Club 10K	kdoyle@sbrmc.org
October 13	The Fergus Snoddy Half Marathon	jowens@jonesboro.org
October 20	The Race for Awareness 5K	CANCELLED
November 3	The MidSouth Marathon & Half Marathon	arkrecords@sbcglobal.net

October 20th Race for Awareness 5K has been cancelled.



12 Remaining Series Events for 2007

Member Profile: Aven Dunlap



RRAC's Aven Dunlap and daughter Maegan after a day of horseback riding.

RRAC: Tell me a little about yourself, and your family.

Aven: I met my husband, Rodney, about 12 years ago. I had prayed for years to be the woman I needed to be when I met the right man. My prayers were answered. We married in 2003, and I received two wonderful "bonus" children - not mine by birth - but try telling my heart that! Maegan was barely 10, and Tyler was almost 13. Maegan had been in treatment at Arkansas Children's Hospital for 6 months, diagnosed with osteosarcoma, bone cancer in the hip joints and spine. The family had lost Sheila, the kids mother, from cancer years earlier. Maegan was the 6th consecutive generation cancer victim from the maternal side.

Our honeymoon was a family honeymoon to Orlando for Maegan's Make A Wish trip. Maegan was unable to walk at the time because the tumors were causing so much pain, but she had the best attitude through her circumstances. Classic Maegan: she and her dad were in the car and they passed an ambulance, lights and sirens going, Rodney looked over and she had her eyes closed. Rodney asked Maegan what she was doing and she replied, "Praying that the person in that ambulance is okay." There she was, bald, unable to walk, in pain, and praying for someone she didn't even know.

RRAC: Have you always been an athlete?

Aven: I've never considered myself an athlete, although I've done two half-marathons before. I participated in gymnastics, dance and cheerleading growing up. I have asthma so I let that hold me back from pushing myself. After Maegan died, I decided my life focus needed to be back on God, and trying to make my physical body a place that He would be happy to house. Maegan went through so much with such grace and rarely a complaint. When I run, I remind myself that Maegan can't be here to run and play, so I need to get over myself, and my aching hip and feet and run a little farther. Running is therapy and addictive. A lot of people don't get it, and some days it is a love/hate thing with me and running, but it keeps me somewhat sane in this crazy world.

RRAC: Tell us what you are doing with your first marathon, and your motivation.

Aven: In addition to turning 40 on April 11, I knew this was a great opportunity placed in front of me to do something to honor Maegan's memory. The ACH Foundation set up a special fund in Meagan's memory called "Hope for Healing", based upon a saying, "With each new day there is hope for healing" from a t-shirt that Meagan and I designed to raise money for the ACH Hematology/Oncology Clinic. That t-shirt raised almost \$10,000 for the clinic and they were able to buy a piece of vital diagnostic equipment that was not in the hospital budget.

RRAC: Will you describe what this event means for you as an athlete and a parent?

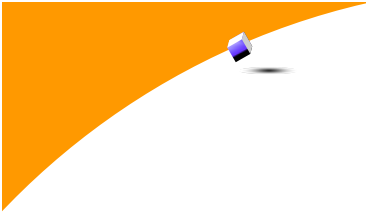
Aven: I use the term "athlete" very loosely. I am not fast and it's never pretty, but I am determined. To accomplish this goal just reminds me of the Scripture (Philippians 4:13) "*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*" I never thought I'd get to this point in running, but a big part of why I am doing this is because I want to raise funds that will benefit other families with children fighting osteosarcoma. As a parent, I have lived the wonderfulness of having been blessed with children, and also felt the devastation at having one of those blessings taken away. I wouldn't wish that heartbreak on anyone and pray that one day a cure will be found.

RRAC: What will the funds you raise go towards?

Aven: Right now there is no cure for bone cancer. If it cannot be cut out, as Maegan's could not, it can be treated and slowed, but it will eventually spread. The Hope for Healing Fund will do two things. First, it will help finance research to find a cure through grants and educational opportunities for those working tirelessly for a cure. Second, it will help buy games, books toys, movies, etc., for kids to use while in the hospital going through treatments. A hospital visit can last from 5 days to 45 days or beyond, and those kids need things to do. We want their hospital stay to be less frightening and more like home if possible.

RRAC: How can RRAC participate?

Aven: RRAC can participate financially by helping us kick-start this fund with donations for my running in the **Country Music Marathon** this month in Nashville. No amount is too small (or big)! A donation is tax-deductable, and needs to be made out in a specific way so that Maegan's fund will receive it. Here is how: **Please make checks payable to ACH Foundation - Hope for Healing Fund** and mail marathon donations to my home at 3716 Limestone Drive, Jonesboro, AR 72404. I will present all checks to ACH after the race. If I am unable to run for any unforeseen reason (illness, injury, etc.) I will be glad to return someone's check if they will just stick a note with their donation. This fund is ongoing and we would be honored if, when people are planning their future annual giving, would keep Maegan's fund in mind. Please e-mail me with any questions at aven@suddenlink.net. Other than donations, thoughts and prayers of encouragement, health and most importantly to run in a way that honors not only God, but Maegan's memory would be most appreciated.



The mission of RRAC is to promote health, fitness, and competition throughout Northeast Arkansas.

Newsletter Corner or Some Other Corny Title

I wasn't a journalism or English major ... obviously. In fact, I made a B in English I and II.

I wrote papers for different classes all throughout college, and it wasn't uncommon for me to receive an A for content, and a B or a C for "writing style".

What is "writing style" anyway? Who gets to decide?

What I do get, and have tremendous respect for, is a humble athlete, and a loving parent. So much so ... that I wish I could actually write to you how courageous, how devoted, and how faithful a fellow athlete really is.

This would probably require some type of "writing style" that I don't have. But what I do have is an immense respect for fellow athletes who muster up all the courage and discipline they

can pull together and take on the challenge of a first marathon.

Aven Dunlap's challenges and motivations have raised the bar in my mind. I ran 13 miles with Aven this morning so I giggle inside that she doesn't consider herself an athlete! She went on to run a total of 20 today. I went on to a hot bath, and a cup of Java.

What parent, brother, or sister doesn't ache inside at the loss of the precious life of Maegan? I never knew her. But, her memory lives on forever inside her "Mommy".

CHAMPION. My dictionary tells me that the *adjective* definition for champion is: the best, world-class, undefeated. The *noun* definition is: advocate, defender, supporter, protector.

Aven Dunlap is my noun definition of a champion. As the adjective suggest, Aven may not be a world-class runner. I'm pretty sure she has been defeated in races. However, her picture should be beside the noun listing. What athlete and parent has been more of an advocate? Aven is still fighting the cancer that took her daughter's life, and still loving and seeking the God who is the giver of all life. Aven continues on with her love for Maegan as she defends and supports others who will fight the same fight.

I've said it before, and I'll probably say it all my life. Runners are the coolest people I know. Thank you to Aven Dunlap who unknowing reminded me of the definition of a true champion, and an amazing Mommy. Many are praying for you and YOU CAN DO IT.



Two Champions