**Basic Runner/Running Lingo**

**Aid Station:** In road racing, a designated point along the course that offers water and (often) sports drinks to competitors, typically handed out by volunteers. Gels, energy bars, petroleum jelly, and other items may be offered as well. Also called “fluid station,” “water station,” or “water stop.”

**Bandit:** One who participates in a race unofficially, without having registered and paid for it. This is considered bad form and is discouraged.

**Bib:** Shorthand for “bib number,” the paper or Tyvek sheets printed with a unique number (and sometimes a runner’s name) to identify a runner during a race.

**Chafing:**

**Chip:** A small plastic disc affixed to the shoelace, used to track a runner’s progress and record his or her times during a race. Chips are detected when they pass over an electronic mat at the start and finish of a race course, and often at various points in between. Also called “chip timing.”

**Chute:** In racing, the area immediately past the finish line. So-called because it is typically long and narrow, meant to keep competitors moving post race and funnel them away from the finish area.

**Cool-down:** A period of light physical activity, such as jogging, done after a longer and/or harder period of activity.

**Corral:** A partitioned area at the start of a race, generally used to group competitors according to projected finishing time, with the fastest runners in the first corral and the slowest in the last.

**Expo:** Short for exposition, an assemblage of commercial booths, displays, and (sometimes) informational seminars held in conjunction with a road race, usually in a large hall or convention center. Bib numbers, timing chips, and race packets are typically picked up at a race expo.

**Fartlek:** A Swedish word meaning, “speed play.” Any run or segment of a run in which pace or effort varies at the runner’s whim or as part of a workout.

**Flats:** Very lightweight running shoes, minimally constructed with very little support or cushioning, used for racing or for track workouts.
Hill Repeats: A training run that incorporates repeatedly running up a hill or hills in preparation to run a race with a hilly course and/or to strengthen the legs.

Intervals: A segment – defined by time or, more often, distance – within a speed or track workout. Speed intervals are interspersed with periods of recovery. Also called “repeat.”

Jog: The act of running at a slow, leisurely rate.

Junk Miles: Any amount of running done at relatively low effort without a particular purpose. Contrast with “tempo run,” “speedwork,” “fartlek,” “long run,” etc.

Kick: The act of dramatically increasing one’s speed during a race, usually in the final stretch to beat an opponent or opponents at the finish line.

Long Run: Any run that is significantly longer than usual, done at a comfortable, steady pace, with the intention of building stamina. Most training plans call for one long run per week, typically on a Saturday or Sunday.

Negative Split: To run the second half of a run or race faster than the first half.

Pronation: The extent to which the foot rolls inward.

Rabbit: A pacesetter, often paid, enlisted to take the leaders of a race through a predetermined distance at a predetermined pace, then to relinquish the lead.

Singlet: A sleeveless, scooped-neck shirt designed for running, typically of synthetic materials. Sometimes called, inaccurately, a tank top.

Speedwork: Any running workout that involves running certain predefined segments at a faster-than-normal pace, interspersed with periods of recovery. Typically done in between a warm-up and a cool-down. Also called “intervals” or “track workout.”

Split: The time recorded for any specific segment of a run, race, or workout.

Supination: The extent to which a foot rolls outward.

Tempo Run: A training run of a specific duration or distance, done at a steady effort level typically somewhere around a 10-K race pace—hard, but manageable.

VO2 Max: The maximum amount of oxygen your body can process.

Wall: Usually “the wall.” The point in a longer race where a runner’s energy level suddenly and catastrophically plummet, leaving the runner feeling as if he or she has hit a literal wall. In a marathon, this typically occurs around miles 18 through 22.
**Warm-up:** A period of light physical activity, such as jogging, done before a longer and/or harder period of activity.