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BIRMINGHAM TRACK CLUB  
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# THE VULCAN RUNNER

March 2026 **3**



## BTC ANNUAL PARTY RECAP

*By Julie Pearce, Editor, The Vulcan Runner*

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# BTC ANNUAL PARTY RECAP



For those of you who attended the BTC Annual Party on February 7, we know you had as much fun as we did! For those of you who missed it, you missed the party of the year! Big thanks to BTC Social Chair Haley Flanery and her committee for a wonderful Mardi Gras themed party at Avondale Upstairs. The food was delicious, the drinks were cold, and the party on the dance floor was hotter than running in August!

We were thrilled to recognize our 1200 Mile Club first-timers as well as consecutive 5-, 10-, 15-year and lifetime milestone achievers. You can view a complete list of participants at [this link](#) on the BTC website, but we'd like to make a very special shout out to our newest members of the 1200 Mile Club:

- |                  |                  |                        |
|------------------|------------------|------------------------|
| Eugene Aquino    | Arian Jack       | Jamie Rose             |
| Brett Burbank    | Kimberly Johnson | Gwendolyn Sanders      |
| Tyler Cromey     | Anna Louise Lane | Cory Stephens          |
| Samantha Davis   | Elishua Markham  | Mariah Stewart         |
| Stephanie Denney | Nikita Matthews  | Amy Syx                |
| Robby Grames     | Lexi Namer       | Christine Velezis      |
| Jonathan Haefs   | Vivian Quinn     | Chassi Waddell         |
| Emery Hicks      | John Robertson   | Mary Elizabeth Whitley |
| Anna Hurst       | Brian Rodgers    |                        |

Our annual service awards were given to three very special members of the BTC. **Kaki Jenkins** was the recipient of the prestigious Dr. Arthur Black/Rick Melanson Annual Service Award. This award is the highest annual award given by the BTC for outstanding service and leadership. Kaki is the quintessential volunteer at most every BTC event, in addition to assisting with multiple committees over her many years with the club. Kaki will be the caretaker of the Dr. Arthur Black/Rick Melanson annual service award trophy (aka the BTC Cup) for the next year.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

# BTC ANNUAL PARTY RECAP

The **Randy Johnson/Danny Haralson Annual Service Award** is given to a “newer” BTC member who has demonstrated outstanding leadership and freely given their time volunteering in ways that help further the mission of the BTC. This year’s recipient of the award is Sarah Jensen. Sarah is the BTC Moderate Run Coordinator and has been an active volunteer, cheerleader, and participant in all things BTC this year.

The BTC also had the honor of awarding the inaugural **Kelly Sims Spirit of the BTC Annual Award**. On May 28, 2025, the Birmingham Track Club lost one of its brightest members, Kelly Sims. Known for her sharp humor, generous heart, and unforgettable laugh, Kelly had a rare gift for making everyone around her feel seen, supported, and part of the community. She had a way of encouraging, motivating, and uplifting people -- not just when others were watching, but simply because she cared. She was truly one of a kind.

Kelly served as Chair of the 1200 Mile Club for two years, continuing to support fellow runners even after her cancer diagnosis and throughout treatment. Her commitment to this club -- and to the people in it -- never wavered. Kelly was so much more than her diagnosis; she showed up consistently, quietly, and sincerely, always lifting others with her kindness, encouragement, and passion for running.

To honor her legacy, the BTC created the Kelly Sims Spirit of the BTC Award. This award will be presented annually to a member who reflects Kelly’s unwavering commitment to the running community -- someone whose character, kindness, and passion for running helps lift others up in both good times and hard moments. It recognizes those who show up for others simply because they care, offering encouragement and support even when no one is watching.

Congratulations to **Joey Saffold**, the inaugural winner of the Kelly Sims Spirit of the BTC Award.

*And finally, to cap off the business meeting part of our evening, we also elected new BTC officers for 2026:*

**President:** Bradley Wells  
**Vice President:** Matt Ennis  
**Secretary:** Vicky Brakhage

**Treasurer:** Ruth Kles  
**Past President:** Jamie Trimble

An invite to the best, most fun party around is only one “perk” of your BTC membership. If you are not yet a member, or if your membership has lapsed, [please join \(or re-join\) today!](#)



# PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

By Bradley Wells



## Hello BTC Family,

It's an incredible honor to step into the role of President of the Birmingham Track Club. Although I'm not new to this organization, this is my first year serving as President, and I couldn't be more excited about the opportunity to continue investing in a club and community that mean so much to me. The BTC has a long, proud history of bringing runners together, supporting healthier lives, and celebrating the sport we love - and I'm grateful for the chance to help carry that legacy forward.

I also want to congratulate our newest officer, **Matt Ennis**, on his election as Vice President. Matt brings great energy and passion to the BTC, and I'm looking forward to working alongside him and the rest of our leadership team as we take on the year ahead.

As we look to 2026, our goals are big and bold—just like our running community.

### First, we're setting our sights on reaching 1,000 members.

Our club is at its best when the community is growing, welcoming, and connected. From training groups to race days to volunteer opportunities, every new member strengthens the fabric of what we do. I believe we can get there together.

**Second, we're committed to continuing to deliver the very best race experiences in the Southeast.** BTC races have always been known for their quality, atmosphere, and community spirit, and this year we aim to raise that bar even higher. Whether you toe the line for one race or all of them, we want each event to feel unforgettable.

### Upcoming Races & Club Challenges

We're already gearing up for some incredible events in our Race Series:

#### Statue to Statue – April 4

One of Birmingham's most unique and challenging races, taking runners from Vulcan to Liberty. If you've never run it, this is the year to experience it! [Register Here - S2S](#)

#### Peavine Falls Run – July 4

A beloved BTC tradition and a favorite for so many in our community. Start your Independence Day with a classic climb, a thrilling descent, and a whole lot of fun. [Register Here - Peavine](#)

And don't forget—there's still time to sign up for the 1200 Mile Club! Whether you're chasing fitness, consistency, or a big personal milestone, this challenge is a fantastic way to stay motivated all year long. [Sign Up Now](#)

Thank you for your trust, your enthusiasm, and your commitment to the Birmingham Track Club. I can't wait to see what we achieve together this year—on the roads, on the trails, and throughout our amazing running community.

See you out there,

**Bradley Wells**

*President, Birmingham Track Club*



# 2026 Officers



## President

**Bradley Wells**

president@birminghamtrackclub.com



## Treasurer

**Ruth Kles**

treasurer@birminghamtrackclub.com



## Vice-President

**Matt Ennis**

vicepresident@birminghamtrackclub.com



## Secretary

**Vicky Brakhage**

secretary@birminghamtrackclub.com



## BTC Committees

General Counsel/Parliamentarian  
Long Run Coordinator  
Moderate Run Coordinator  
Medical Director  
Social Chairs

Lauren Weber  
Cameron Estes  
Sarah Jensen  
Dr. Rachel Henderson  
Britney Cowart  
and Kaki Jenkins

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Membership Benefits  
Merchandise

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Cameron Estes  
Ellen Ortis  
Bradley Wells  
Julie Pearce

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“The Vulcan Runner” Newsletter  
Japan Exchange Program  
1200 Mile Club  
Volunteer Coordinator  
Historian  
Finish Line Crew  
Webmaster  
IT Chair  
USATF Representative

Rebecca Williamson  
Matt Grainger  
Kim Benner  
Trish Portuese  
Jamie Trimble  
Kabeer Ahmed  
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usatfrep@birminghamtrackclub.com

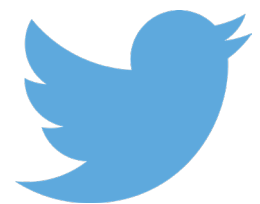


## BTC Race Directors

Adam's Heart Run  
Statue 2 Statue  
Peavine Falls  
Vulcan Run

Vicky Brakhage  
Judy Loo  
Marla Gruber  
Hunter Bridwell

adamsheart@birminghamtrackclub.com  
statue2statue@birminghamtrackclub.com  
peavinefalls@birminghamtrackclub.com  
vulcan@birminghamtrackclub.com



## BTC Mission Statement

The primary purpose of the Birmingham Track Club (BTC) shall be the education and training of individuals in and around the community of Birmingham, AL, as to the benefits of jogging, running, and walking for fitness, health, and recreation.

## Contact BTC at:

Birmingham Track Club  
P.O. Box 530363  
Birmingham, AL 35223  
secretary@BirminghamTrackClub.com

## Race Results

Find the latest and most complete local race results at the following:  
birminghamtrackclub.com  
championship-racing.com



# STATUE 2 STATUE: THE SOUTH'S TOUGHEST (BUT MOST FUN!) 15K

By Judy Loo, Race Director, Statue to Statue

WOW -- can you believe it's that time again? One of the BTC's favorite races is right around the corner, and we know how much you all enjoy it. The Statue to Statue 15K, one of the South's toughest and most iconic runs, will take place on April 4, 2026. The course is challenging, the atmosphere is incredible, and the post race celebration never disappoints.

There is a slight adjustment to the start and finish locations this year -- nothing major, just shifted down a bit -- and we're excited about the update. The course itself remains unchanged.

The post race party will be a blast, featuring adult beverages provided by Trim Tab and our traditional grilled hot dogs donated by Brooke Dodson with Smithfield Foods for Nathan's Hot Dogs.

If you run fast and place in the top three of your age group, you'll get to choose a gift card from **Oak Hill Bar & Grill**, **Taco Mama**, or **SoHo Social**.

We're also proud to highlight two BTC members who are sponsoring this year's event (you might recognize them from the Saturday BTC runs) -- thank you, Michael and Jason!

- Michael Brown with Strategic Financial Partners -- Learn more about Michael's services here: <https://strategicfinancialpartners.com/our-team/michael-brown/>
- Jason Smith with Crestwood Roofing -- Contact Jason for any roofing or painting needs: Crestwood Roofing Company LLC | Roofing Contractor | Birmingham, AL <https://crestwoodroofingcompany.com/>

Transportation will remain the same as in previous years. You will still be bused to the start line, with the **last bus leaving at 6:30 AM**. Please remember that **race day packet pickup and registration will take place at the finish line** at Liberty Park Animal Hospital in River Run. *There will be no registration at the start line.* The race will begin promptly at 8:00 AM.

We're also planning a BTC social to go along with the event -- stay tuned for more details. We'll have a few door prizes, and for those who haven't registered yet, a discount code will be available.



The South's Toughest 15k

**SATURDAY  
APRIL 4, 2026**



# RUMPSHAKER 5K:

## Let's Make a Difference Together

By Amanda Vandegrift, President, Rumpshaker, Inc., Race Director, Rumpshaker 5K



Rumpshaker, Inc. is the non-profit organization behind the Rumpshaker 5K and 1 Mile Fun Run. Our founders, board of directors and race committee all agree that raising awareness about colon cancer matters. It matters because colon cancer has the potential to affect all of us. It is equally common in men and women, it can develop without any symptoms, and it can develop at any age. By increasing awareness about this disease, we hope to increase the screening rates. Colon cancer is one of the most treatable and beatable cancers if diagnosed early, but sadly, many individuals delay their routine colonoscopies and their cancer is found in a later stage when treatment options are fewer and success rates are minimized.

*“Believe that what you do matters and will make a difference in people’s lives. You don’t have to save the world... but you can make a difference one person at a time.” ~unknown*

Our organization was created in memory of Lisa Martz. Lisa was diagnosed with colon cancer at the age of 48. The only symptom she had was fatigue. Lisa was not the type of person who liked bringing attention to herself but during her nearly four-year fight with this disease, she was the true symbol of hope, faith and determination. Those around her took notice of her extraordinarily positive attitude and strength despite her circumstances.

*“Never underestimate the valuable and important difference you make in every life you touch, for the impact you make today has a powerful rippling effect on every tomorrow.” ~unknown*

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# RUMPSHAKER 5K:

Let's Make a Difference Together

Lisa's powerful influence on her family and friends led them to create an organization that continues her fight by giving back to others. The funds raised by your participation in the Rumpshaker 5K support various outreach programs, prevention efforts, and patient services including but not limited to:

- The Lisa Martz Hope Fund, which provides short term financial assistance to patients;
- Partnership with organizations like the Alabama Department of Public Health and the American Cancer Society to promote colorectal cancer awareness and increase screening rates;
- The Semi-Colon Club, a support group for those affected by colorectal cancer;
- The Lisa Martz Hope Scholarship, awarded to college students whose families have been affected by colorectal cancer; and
- Rumpshaker at Work, a corporate health education program.

**DON'T WAIT, REGISTER TODAY FOR THE 18TH ANNUAL RUMPSHAKER 5K!**

**March 28, 2026 - Regions Field**

[www.Rumpshaker5k.com](http://www.Rumpshaker5k.com) - [info@rumpshaker5k.com](mailto:info@rumpshaker5k.com)

## ARE YOU AT RISK FOR COLORECTAL CANCER?

Answer the following six questions to determine if you are at risk of developing polyps or colorectal cancer:

1. Are you age 45 or older?
2. Have you had a colorectal polyp or cancer in the past?
3. Has anyone in your family had polyps or colorectal cancer?
4. Does your diet contain foods that are high in fat and low in fiber?
5. Have you been diagnosed with an inflammatory bowel disease such as Crohn's Disease or ulcerative colitis?
6. Have you noticed persistent changes in your bowel habits?

If you answered "yes" to one or more of the questions above, you are at risk for developing colorectal polyps or cancer. Please contact your physician to discuss the results of this survey, other risk factors and to review the screening options that are available to you.



# RACING FOR INCLUSION

By Jacob Couch, Ambassador for The Kyle Pease Foundation

## It is race day!!

You wake up early, head to the venue, do a light warm-up and stretch, then make your way to the start corral. The energy is building. The anticipation is real. You're ready.

It sounds simple enough.

But for many members of the disability community, that experience isn't so simple – and often, it isn't possible.

For individuals who cannot compete on their own, they may never know the feeling of lining up for their first race. They may never feel the surge of energy as they pass the rally corner, feeding off the roar of the crowd. They may never experience that unforgettable moment when a finisher's medal is draped around their neck.

## And everyone deserves that moment.

My name is Jacob Couch, and I am a Duo Race Team participant with [The Kyle Pease Foundation \(KPF\)](#). A Duo Race Team consists of a push-assist runner/bike rider paired with an athlete from the disability community. An assisting runner or rider may help navigate a push-racer through the course or ride alongside their athlete on a bike for assistance and support when needed. Depending on the athlete's ability, athletes may compete on a handcycle or in a push-racer. Together, the Team competes in race distances ranging from a 5K to a full marathon, and even sprint triathlons up to a full 140.6-mile Ironman event.

For me, helping the athlete take part in this experience is well worth the effort, even the extra work required to guide them through the course and power up the hills. The athlete's joy fuels my own. Their excitement becomes my energy, carrying me through every mile. Each time I race with KPF, I feel like I'm reliving the magic of a first race. I'm often paired with a different athlete at each event, which means I get to share in a new "first race" experience again and again. Through competition, the athlete gains more than just a medal. They experience the power of effort, perseverance, and possibility. They see that determination on the racecourse can translate into everyday life. That is how we drive disability inclusion through sport – the very mission of The Kyle Pease Foundation.

However, my advocacy for disability inclusion goes beyond participating in Duo Team Racing. There is a solo component that allows me to climb for those who cannot, #climbingforinclusion. Whether participating in a 29029 Everesting event (29,029 feet is the height of Mt. Everest), an IronHike Productions challenge, or competing a personal goal like completing three loops on the Manitou



Incline this April, each effort is fueled by purpose. Advocating for KPF provides the energy and motivation I need to push through these endurance challenges. Knowing that every step represents someone who may not otherwise have the opportunity to compete gives deeper meaning to every mile climbed.

This passion has also led me to partner with Adaptive Star Mobility to create my own Duo Team, #TeamCouch. While most of my races with KPF take place in Georgia, forming #TeamCouch allows me to continue advocating for KPF beyond its primary footprint. Through this initiative, I can partner with a local disability organization whenever I race, offering one of their participants the opportunity to join me in the competition. In doing so, we expand outreach, create new opportunities, and continue advancing disability inclusion through sports.

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# RACING FOR INCLUSION

By Jacob Couch, Ambassador for The Kyle Pease Foundation

The Kyle Pease Foundation was founded in 2011 by brothers Brent and Kyle Pease. Upon completion of their first duo team triathlon, Kyle was determined to share the experience of inclusion with others within the disability community. This started the template for the formation of KPF. After establishing their not-for-profit organization, Brent and Kyle supported their first athlete in March 2012, and the organization has continued to grow since then.

KPF has a simple mission: to improve the lives of people with disabilities through sports and beyond. Sports can teach us so much more than athletics, with many lessons that can be applied to life (teamwork, how effort and dedication can yield dividends, how inclusion in athletics can carry over to everyday life, etc.). Through the Foundation's work, they are not only able to provide racing opportunities for their athletes, the Foundation is able to provide life changing grants to individuals within the disability community (for accessible transportation, home improvements to make an individual's home more accessible, etc.). The Foundation has also

expanded its programs to Kyle Pease Kids, expanding access to younger athletes and youth volunteers, and the Foundation has created an Inclusive Employment Program. Not only is the Foundation providing a pathway through sports, but it is also driving inclusion through a pathway to employment, which becomes a powerful tool for engagement and empowerment within the disability community.

I am deeply honored to represent KPF as an Ambassador, entering my third year with their ambassador program. My only regret is that I did not become aware of KPF sooner. The feeling of empowerment and belonging I observe in the Duo Race Team motivates me to continue these racing efforts and to keep helping KPF by #pushingbeyondlimits.

If you would like to learn more about my involvement with KPF, how you can join me in a local race to experience Duo Team Racing, or more about KPF, please contact me at [jbc.fundraising@gmail.com](mailto:jbc.fundraising@gmail.com).

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<sup>1</sup>Our Story, The Kyle Pease Foundation About Section, <https://kylepeasefoundation.org/aboutkpf>



# MEDICATION AND MILES:

## Weighing the Pros and Cons of GLP-1 Agonists

By Ashton Bellamy, PharmD, and Kim Benner, PharmD



One of the most popular medication classes right now are glucagon-like peptide-1 receptor agonists, also known as GLP-1s or GLP-1 RAs (receptor agonists). This class was approved in the early 2000s for the treatment of type II diabetes (T2DM), but as patients and clinicians began to see weight loss as a side effect of the medications, usage grew. At this time there are ten active drugs on the market, sold under various names and for the treatment of type II diabetes and/or obesity. In 2023, GLP-1 RAs prescribed for both type II diabetes and obesity generated more than \$37 billion, and this number is expected to climb to nearly \$150 billion by 2030.<sup>1</sup> Recently, in December 2025, the first oral GLP-1 indicated for weight loss (semaglutide, Wegovy) was approved.

**A list of the common brand names and the active pharmaceutical component are listed below in Table 1.**

These medications work by mimicking a natural hormone, glucagon-like peptide-1, which functions to reduce blood sugar levels and appetite. It accomplishes this by stimulating insulin release from the pancreas, and when insulin is released, blood sugar levels will decrease. Additionally, this hormone inhibits glucagon release, which could increase blood sugar levels as well as slows down stomach emptying, leading to longer satiety (feeling of fullness) and decreased appetite. There is also some evidence that these medications may have neuroprotective effects as GLP-1 receptors are found in the

Active Drug	Brand Name	Indicated for T2DM	Indicated for Obesity
Semaglutide	Ozempic	X	
	Wegovy*		X
	Rybelsus*	X	
Dulaglutide	Trulicity	X	
Liraglutide	Victoza	X	
	Saxenda		X
Exenatide	Byetta	X	
	Bydureon BCise**	X	
Tirzepatide	Mounjaro	X	
	Zepbound		X

Table 1: Brand names, active drug, and indication for GLP-1 RAs. \*oral medication; \*\*long acting exenatide

brain. One small study also found a decrease in Alzheimer's and other neurodegenerative disorders; however, more research is needed to elucidate their full benefit.<sup>2</sup>

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# MEDICATION AND MILES:

## Weighing the Pros and Cons of GLP-1 Agonists

These medications were originally approved for the treatment of type II diabetes, in conjunction with diet and exercise. As more of the GLP-1 RAs were brought to market, more of their effects were seen. This article will review some pros and cons of therapy with GLP-1 RAs.

**Pros:** Because it is known that this class of medications is beneficial for both type II diabetes and the management of obesity, this section will focus on other beneficial aspects of this therapy.

**Cardiovascular protection:** Several of the GLP-1 RAs available have been studied and proven to provide cardiovascular protection. The mechanism by which these medications provide this benefit is not fully understood; however, by helping with glucose management and lowering weight, as well as some other factors, they help control risk factors that lead to heart disease and the resulting devastating events that can occur. Major trials looked at these medications and their ability to protect participants from events like heart attacks, strokes, and hospitalization for other cardiovascular complications. It is important to note that not all of the medications in this class confer this benefit. Ozempic, injectable Wegovy, Rybelsus, Trulicity, and Victoza all have been studied and shown to provide cardiovascular protection. It is important to note that the oral version of Wegovy has not been studied or confirmed to have cardiovascular protection yet; however, these outcomes were studied for Rybelsus and affirmed in 2025 with the SOUL Trial.<sup>3</sup>

**Kidney protection:** Some of the GLP-1 RAs also provide renal protection against development or progression of kidney disease, either directly or indirectly. In patients with diabetes, increased blood sugar levels can damage kidneys, and usage of these medications can help prevent this from occurring. Weight loss and blood pressure reduction also are significant factors that can contribute to kidney disease, and these medications may help control this. Additionally, GLP-1 RAs can decrease the amount of protein that

is excreted in the urine, which can be a marker of kidney damage. Indirectly, reduced inflammation and improved kidney blood flow, which helps protect against kidney damage. Ozempic, injectable Wegovy, Trulicity, Victoza, and Byetta have all been shown to provide kidney protection. Of note, the oral GLP-1 RAs (semaglutide: oral Wegovy and Rybelsus) have not been shown to have protective kidney effects, but a slower decline in kidney function was observed in the SOUL trial, which evaluated patients with type II diabetes and heart and/or kidney disease.<sup>3</sup>

Other conditions (not an all-inclusive list): In addition to the two major benefits these medications can provide, there are other conditions that may be improved with the use of these medications.

- Other metabolic diseases, like some liver diseases because of their anti-inflammatory properties and reduction in liver fat.
- Obstructive sleep apnea (OSA): when taken for weight loss, or when weight loss is an indirect side effect of therapy with one of these medications, improvement in OSA can be observed. This is accomplished by stabilization in breathing patterns, improved respiratory control, and reduction in inflammation.<sup>4</sup>
- Lifestyle changes may be facilitated with the use of a GLP-1 RA. Weight loss and improved control on blood sugar levels may make it easier to adopt and maintain a healthier lifestyle, with diet and exercise.

**Cons:** In addition to cost (these are very expensive medications) and accessibility (they have also been in very high demand and supply has not always kept up with demand), these medications may have some drawbacks. This is not an all-inclusive list, and it is important to discuss any concerns with your healthcare provider.

**Administration:** Most of these are administered subcutaneously and depending on the specific medication, on a schedule of once or twice daily, or weekly. Needles are required for administration of these medications into the layer of fat that is just below the skin. Prior to December 2025, the only oral GLP-1 RA was Rybelsus (oral semaglutide), which is only indicated for type II diabetes. Now, oral Wegovy (also oral semaglutide) is on the market and is approved for chronic weight management. The oral formulations of GLP-1 RAs require administration in the morning, on an empty stomach, with up to 4 ounces of water only, and separated by at least 30 minutes before eating food, drinking beverages, or taking other oral medications.

**Gastrointestinal (GI) effects:** These are probably the most well-known side effects of the class. Patients on therapy with any GLP-1



# MEDICATION AND MILES:

## Weighing the Pros and Cons of GLP-1 Agonists

RA have probably experienced a GI complication. These side effects can be severe and include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, as well as constipation and are a result of slowed gastric emptying. These effects tend to occur when patients first start therapy, but also when doses are increased. These side effects may improve with stable doses and consistent therapy. These side effects are seen in both the injectable and oral formulations of available GLP-1 RAs. It is important to note that when severe GI effects occur, dehydration can be a result.

**GLP-1 RA teeth:** This is a newer adverse effect seen in patients on a GLP-1 RA and is more commonly referred to as “Ozempic teeth”. Dentists started noticing patients on these medications experience sudden and severe enamel erosion, decay, sensitivity, and even tooth loss. Additionally, patients may experience dry mouth, inflamed gums, and cracked or loose teeth. The mechanism by which this occurs isn’t fully understood but is thought to be a result of the side effects of GLP-1 RAs.

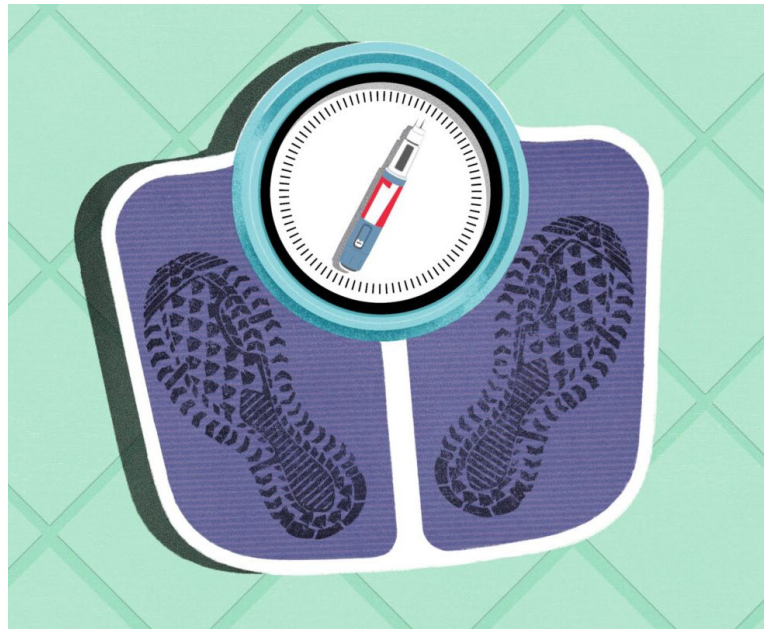
**Muscle wasting:** Patients taking these medications may experience weight loss; however, the weight loss may come from fat stores, but also muscle, with some literature suggesting 40%-60% reductions in lean muscle mass.<sup>5</sup> Lesser reductions (~15%) are also reported; however, patients on a GLP-1 RA may experience a reduction in their muscle mass. Patients who are older or are female may be at higher risk for experiencing muscle loss when on therapy. Increasing protein intake may help prevent some loss of muscle mass, but there is not a consensus on the daily protein goal.<sup>6</sup> Recently, the Obesity Society did suggest a goal range of 1.2-1.6 grams of protein per kilogram of body weight per day for helping reduce or prevent muscle loss during weight loss.<sup>5</sup>

**Other cosmetic considerations:** “Ozempic face” is a term used to describe the sunken faces of some users of these medications. The rapid weight loss caused by these medications can create a hollowed and sunken appearance, which also can increase sagging and wrinkles. Loose or sagging skin also can result from rapid weight loss, and as we age, our skin loses elasticity and may not be able to fully retract. A rare complication that has recently been identified is blindness that is secondary to a condition called non-arteritic anterior ischemic optic neuropathy (NAION). This is a condition that occurs when blood flow is blocked to the optic nerve, causing sudden, permanent vision loss. The underlying mechanism for this is not well understood, but it is thought that rapid lowering of blood sugar triggers microvascular changes. This has been observed in patients with type II diabetes over the age of 50. While the overall percentage of this occurring is low and is considered extremely rare, it is important to be aware of and consider in patients who may have vision problems at baseline.<sup>7</sup> Lastly, hair loss has been

reported with use of GLP-1 RAs and is thought to be attributed to the rapid weight loss and physiological stress that these medications and actions can put on the body. Therapy and GI side effects also may cause nutritional deficiencies that may also impact hair loss.<sup>8</sup> More research is needed to investigate the associations of GLP-1 RA use and hair loss.

### Other considerations:

- These medications should not be taken by patients with a history of multiple endocrine neoplasia syndrome type II or medullary thyroid cancer or for those with a history of pancreatitis, and caution should be exercised in patients taking other medications to lower blood sugar.
- Patients with a history of gallbladder issues should be cautious with these medications as there are reports of increased incidence of gallstones and gallbladder inflammation.
- Additionally, kidney injury can occur if patients become severely dehydrated as a result of GI complications.



### Impact on exercise and fitness:

It is important to evaluate the impact that these medications may have on one’s fitness journey. Loss of muscle mass, potential for GI effects to interrupt/disrupt workouts, and dehydration may negatively impact fitness and ability to participate in workouts or runs. However, consistency with exercise and adhering to a healthy diet may improve

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# MEDICATION AND MILES:

## Weighing the Pros and Cons of GLP-1 Agonists

a person's fitness journey and help them reach their fitness goals. Strength training and protein intake should be prioritized while a patient is on therapy with a GLP-1 RA and discussions with a healthcare provider should take place to optimize therapy and outcomes while minimizing any side effects that could occur.

### References

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## Strengthen your movement with TherapySouth Endurance

Get your running efficiency to it's maximum potential by having it evaluated by a TherapySouth Endurance specialist. Our trained therapists use gait analysis to assess your dynamic pressure and patterns during activity.

### Our services:

- identify movement dysfunction to decrease stress to joints and soft tissues while preventing injury
- provide treatments that can improve efficiency and power, increase flexibility and speed up recovery



Scan the QR code to learn more about our wellness programs.



# BIRMINGHAM TRACK CLUB MEMBERSHIP NEWS

There are tons of great reasons to become a member of the Birmingham Track Club! The BTC sponsors and sanctions many local races. The BTC publishes your favorite monthly newsletter, *The Vulcan Runner*, to keep you up to date on the local running community. The BTC also sets up weekly training runs with various distances, targeting half and full marathons, and makes sure that there are water stops along the way. Don't miss out on fantastic socials that are making a comeback, as well as exclusive BTC apparel for our members. Most importantly, BTC Members receive \*discounts\* on BTC races, as well as many other races in and around the Birmingham area, and at several local merchants!

Whether you are a beginner or an experienced runner, joining the BTC is a great way to get involved in the running community, meet other runners, and stay informed of running events in the area. We invite all of you to [join the BTC](#) or [renew your membership!](#) See you on the run soon!

## Please welcome the following new and returning members to the Birmingham Track Club:

Hannah Basquill	Jacob Couch	Michael Jenkins	Carlie Robertson
Matt Basquill	Tyler Crome	Emily Johnston	Dean Sides
Webb Basquill	Kyle DeMarco	Ruth Kles	Shaunda Smith
Addison Basquill	Matthew England	Lauren Losavio	Matthew Smith
Shelby Bradley	Rita Goyal	Charles McCalley	Chester Soileau
Alexis Brakhage	Shawn Goyal	Diane McKeffer	Adam R Wende
Joseph Brakhage	Meghan Goyal	Randolph Millican	Sarah Whorton
Elizabeth Brakhage	Munish Goyal	Susanne Moore	Chris Williams
Aaron Calvert	Charlie Harmon	Leslie Palmer	Larry Woodard
Kili Camacho Yau	David Hart	Lee Pearce	Jorge Yau
Andrea Castro	Joel Hoomes	Leigh Ann Pritchett	
Gay Chambers	Melody IZard	John Robertson	

If you are a prospective member, welcome! We hope you will decide to [join the BTC](#) – the [benefits](#) are invaluable! We offer individual and family memberships for one, two and five year terms, as well as lifetime memberships and special discounts. [Visit the BTC website](#) for more information.

## BTC Merchandise

Shop our BTC merchandise available on the [BTC website](#) – stock up!

We love to see members wearing their BTC gear around town at out-of town. Don't forget to take along your favorite BTC merch for those out-of-town races, and [send us a pic!](#) Winter gear will be available soon on the BTC website.



## Ready to Get More Involved in the BTC?

As an all-volunteer organization, the BTC relies on its volunteers for all aspects of our club, from organizing weekly runs and races to coordinating the 1200 Mile Club and selling our exclusive BTC merchandise. Are you ready to take on a new challenge or just give back to the club? If so, we can use your help! In addition to volunteering for upcoming races and events, we need volunteers to help with our Finish Line Crew and volunteers to write articles and put together content for *The Vulcan Runner*.

Multiple volunteers also are needed each week for the water stops the BTC coordinates for our long and moderate distance runs on Saturdays – please see the weekly routes for a link to sign up to provide water and sports drinks at a water stop, or to volunteer to make a financial contribution towards these much needed items.

To learn more about the many ways you can get more involved with the BTC, please contact [BTC President Jamie Trimble](#).



## BTC Group Runs Update



### The Saturday Moderate Group is On the Move!

Big news! As of February 1, we have retired the Moderate Distance Run FB group page and have moved all our Birmingham Track Club group run events to one FB page. We will still have our moderate distance/pace group runs at 6:30 a.m. on Saturdays, but the event will be posted on what is now called the Birmingham Track Club Saturday Run Group page. The BTC will continue to host 6:00 a.m. runs that will target half marathon and full marathon training, so there will be something for every runner!

Be sure to add yourself to the [Birmingham Track Club Saturday Run Group page](#) if you haven't already! We are excited to be on one big, happy BTC family page!



On February 1, 2025

# WE HAVE MOVED

BTC Moderate run events will be posted on the BTC Saturday Group Run FB page (currently called Saturday Long Run)

[Facebook.com/groups/BTCSaturdayLongRun](https://Facebook.com/groups/BTCSaturdayLongRun)

# COMMUNITY CORNER

By Jennifer Andress, Mayor of Homewood, former BTC President



Leaders from the Cities of Trussville, Mountain Brook, and Homewood, in partnership with Jefferson County, recently announced a major federal and state investment in long-planned regional infrastructure improvements, including our long-awaited Hollywood Bridge project. The project includes critical safety and connectivity upgrades along the Hollywood Boulevard bridge over Highway 280 linking Homewood, Mountain Brook, and Birmingham. Improvements will also include installing a new traffic signal and enhancing pedestrian access across the bridge corridor.



Together, these upgrades will ease congestion, address long-standing safety concerns, and strengthen transportation connections among communities across eastern Jefferson County. In a joint statement, Trussville Mayor Ben Short, Homewood Mayor Jennifer Andress, and Mountain Brook Mayor Graham Smith said:

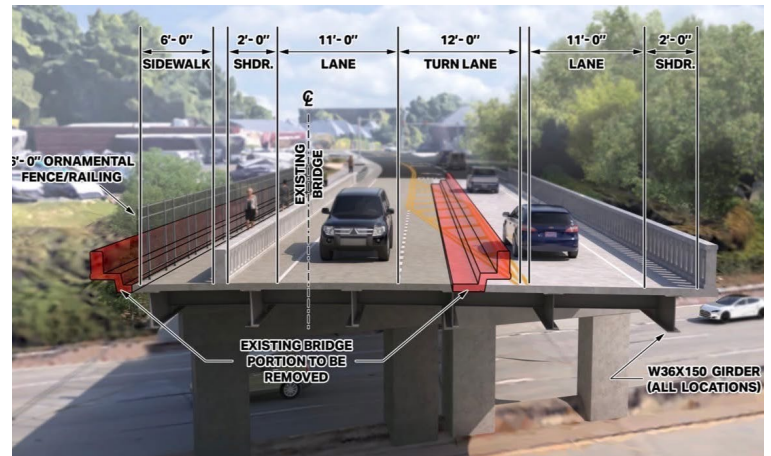
“We are deeply grateful to our federal and state partners, especially Senator Britt and Congressman Aderholt, for their leadership and commitment

to this transformative investment. This appropriation allows us to [among other things] expand and improve connectivity at the Highway 280 bridge serving Birmingham, Homewood, and Mountain Brook. A project more than fourteen years in the making, it corrects a serious pedestrian safety concern and strengthens the connections between our communities. This effort reflects what is possible when relationships, shared priorities, and regional cooperation come together for the greater good.”

Jefferson County Commission President Pro Tem Joe Knight and Commissioner Mike Bolin added, “These projects represent more than roadway improvements. They are an example of strategic long-term planning and regional collaboration. These projects will deliver meaningful results for Jefferson County citizens for years to come and improve the connectivity of our communities.”

In partnership with Jefferson County, Mountain Brook, Homewood, and Birmingham will see critical improvements at the Hollywood Boulevard bridge, including:

- Expanded and improved connectivity across three municipal boundaries.
- Long-awaited enhanced pedestrian safety and access.
- New Sidewalks on Hollywood Blvd. from Malaga Avenue into Mountain Brook.
- New traffic light at exit ramp coming off Highway 280.
- New turn lane going onto existing on-ramp to Highway 280 East. Safety corrections addressing long-standing pedestrian concerns.
- Construction for new sidewalks to begin by early Summer 2026.
- The Bridge enhancements will take approximately 12 months to plan and are expected to go out to bid in Spring of 2027.



These upgrades will strengthen mobility between Birmingham, Homewood, and Mountain Brook while improving traffic flow. We will keep the BTC apprised as the project progresses.

# BTC MEMBER BENEFITS SPOTLIGHT

By Ellen Ortis, Member Benefits Coordinator

## NEW BTC MEMBER BENEFIT!

Join me in welcoming our newest benefit partner, Respite Therapeutic Massage, owned by Jaclyn Brown, wife of BTC Member Sean Brown. Jaclyn is located in Homewood and is offering 10% discount to our members. Check out our Q&A below to learn more about Jaclyn and her what she has to offer!



### Q: How long have you been in massage therapy and what drew you to the profession?

I started Respite Therapeutic Massage in 2023. Before that, I worked in different government labs for over a decade in Florida and Alabama. The work was wearing me down and I wanted to move to a different environment. My running group in Florida had a few massage therapists -- really smart, really compassionate people. I love the work. Despite the fact that most people have similar goals -- they want to move without pain, and they want to manage stress -- no two days are the same.

### Q: When in a training cycle is the best point for a runner to get a massage? Before a long run? After?

My personal sweet spot is 2-3 days after two separate long runs in the second half of my training schedule, but I also tend to have a longer training schedule for my half marathons. Frequency is dependent on many factors -- your time, family obligations, finances, goals, and how well you recover in general. If you're unsure about frequency, I recommend scheduling two massages over 3-4 months and see how you may need to adjust.

These are just suggestions and everyone recovers differently.

### Q: How do runners schedule an appointment with you?

They can [follow this link](#). Use the code that's in the [BTC Members Only page](#) for 10% off.

### Q: A massage for a runner is a great gift — do you sell gift cards?

I do!

## CURRENT LIST OF MEMBER PARTNERS



## NEED TO DOWNLOAD YOUR BTC MEMBERSHIP CARD?

Download (or print) your membership card by clicking [this link](#) or by following these instructions:

- Go to <https://runsignup.com/MyClubMemberships>.
- Log into RunSignUp using the email you used to register with the BTC.
- Click the **“Membership Card”** link for your current BTC membership (need to renew your membership? Click **“manage”** to do so easily).
- Print your membership card or save a .PDF to your phone. Easy peasey!
- Enjoy your BTC discounts (and be sure to support the local businesses who support the BTC)!

## REMEMBER TO USE YOUR BTC MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

- » **MealFit:** 20% off first order. Use Code BHAMTC online (mealfit.co).
- » **Trak Shak:** 10% off. Present card
- » **Moving On:** 10% off. Present card.
- » **Restore:** 10% off services and 20% off memberships. Present card.
- » **FleetFeet:** 10% off. Present card.
- » **Taco Mama/Otey's:** 20% off. Present card. (at participating locations only)

We are adding more fabulous BTC benefits every month. Does your company want to be a part of the action? Email [Benefits@birminghamtrackclub.com](mailto:Benefits@birminghamtrackclub.com)!

# THERAPYSOUTH

## Rigid, Not Ruined: Rethinking Achilles Health

By Hannah Cox,  
TherapySouth



Chronic calf tightness and pain often are blamed on tight muscles. As a result, many runners unsuccessfully spend a lot of time stretching and foam rolling with little to no lasting improvement. If this sounds familiar, the issue may not be tightness at all. Instead, the root of the problem could be insufficient strength and rigidity of the Achilles tendon.

The gastrocnemius and soleus muscles – commonly referred to as the “calf muscles” (though they are only two muscles of the seven muscles in this compartment) -- merge to form the Achilles tendon. This tendon plays a critical role in force dispersion and power generation while running. Its job is not simply to stretch, but to transmit forces efficiently from your foot to the rest of the body!

In clinical practice, we are seeing an increase in Achilles tendon injuries, including ruptures. While flexibility has its place, stretching alone does not prepare the Achilles for high loads and rapid force production required in sport and running.

The idea of increasing tendon “rigidity” can sound counterintuitive. A stiffer (more rigid) tendon is not brittle – it is durable! Appropriate tendon stiffness allows the Achilles to: store and release elastic energy efficiently, tolerate high loads without excessive strain, and transmit force quickly for propulsion during running. In contrast, a tendon that is underloaded and poorly conditioned may elongate too much under stress, increasing injury risk and decreasing performance.

If stretching hasn’t resolved your calf or Achilles symptoms, it may be time to shift the focus to progressive loading. Research consistently shows that tendons adapt best to low-repetition, high resistance, and slow-velocity training. This type of loading improves the tendon’s mechanical properties, including stiffness and load tolerance.

Calf pain and dysfunction are not always a flexibility problem. In many cases, they reflect a capacity problem -- the muscles and tendon are not strong enough for the demands a workout places on them. Improving Achilles rigidity through proper loading is not only safe when progressed correctly – it is protective. By strengthening the calf-Achilles complex, we enhance durability, reduce injury risk, and improve power output for running.



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# 1200 MILE CLUB

## The 2026 Challenge is officially open!

The 2026 edition of the 1200 Mile Club Challenge is now live – [click this link](#), and start logging those miles! When you break down 1200 miles, it's only:

- 100 miles per month
- 25 miles per week
- About 3.5 miles per day

How's that for runner math?! Remember: you must be a BTC member to participate ([click here to join or renew your membership](#)). Go kick butt on the roads or trails this year!

*Matt Grainger, 1200 Mile Club Coordinator*

## Cumulative miles from 2026 are listed below.

Participant	Total
Ahmed, Kabeer	290
Aquino, Eugene	278
Benner, Kim	220
Booher, Lisa	0
Bossard, Teri	369
Boswell, Ryan	104
Boyd, DeWayne	197
Bradley, Shelby	134
Brakhage, Victoria	57
Brasher, Julia	148
Bray, Elizabeth	220
Brown, Katie G.	246
Brown, Sean	0
Burst, Theresa	0
Caine, Lawrence	176
Callahan, Chris	95
Calvert, Scott	222
Campos, Chris	0
Carlton, Bob	0
Castro, Andrea	103
Chaffinch, Violet	98
Chambers, Gay	256
Chandler, Teresa	130
Clay, Brad	225
Cleveland, Jeff	255
Cliett, Stephanie	232
Coe, Emily	296
Coe, Matt	0
Colpack, Susan	194
Cooper, Cara	211

Participant	Total
Corrin, Roger	201
Couch, Jacob	0
Cowart, Dave	172
Cowie, Katelyn	210
Cramer, Robyn	221
Cramer, Steve	44
Creed, Brad	65
CREEL, MARY	223
Davis, Samantha	223
Dawson, Ashley	246
Dawson, Bill	155
Deffenbaugh, Todd	174
Denney, Stephanie	72
Dimicco, Al	211
Dixon, Jeff	131
Duke, Cindy	216
Ennis, Amanda	178
Ennis, Matt	311
Estes, Cameron	110
Estrada, Steven	591
Flanery, Haley	0
Frederick, Winston	142
French, Eric Lewis	0
Goode, Johnny	149
Gorrie, Alie B.	237
Grainger, Matt	380
Grames, Robby	132
Gray, Michael	184
Gruber, Marla	305
Haefs, Jonathan	307

Participant	Total
Hall, Thomas	0
Haralson, Danny	92
Haralson, Micki	229
Hargrave, Alan	221
Harrelson, Karen	329
Harrison, Lisa	165
Heard, Macy	236
Henninger, Alison	190
Hogeland, Angie	229
Hogeland, Jeff	151
Holder, Gene	0
Hoover, Alison	0
Hurst, Anna	0
Jenkins, Kaki	192
Jenkins, Kate Herrera	170
Jensen, Sarah	96
Johnson, Kimberly	41
Johnson, Phillip	0
Johnson, Troy	185
Jones, Julie	103
Kezar, Carolyn	97
Knight, David	215
Krick, Stefanie	306
Kuhn, Jimmy	0
Lamb, Patrick	60
Lancaster, Jeff	346
Landefeld, Dale	201
Lane, Anna Louise	101
Lockett, Michella	0
Losavio, Lauren	238

Participant	Total
Lyda, Beth	103
Lyda, John	306
Maiola, Frankie	237
Malbrough, Quinn	0
Markham, Elishua	193
Martin, Sheree	0
Mathews, Nikita	214
Mathews, Skip	204
McCalley, Charles	99
McInnish, Amber	187
Melton, Kristen	0
Merry, Vicki Sue	111
Millican, Randolph	204
Morris, Gordon	204
Morrow, Alex	0
Moss, Philip	177
Muncher, Monica	73
Murchison, Reginald	317
Nodjomian, Jason	202
Northern, Kristie	388
Orihuela, Carlos	136
Palmore, Chad	46
Pearce, Julie	0
Powell, Patrick	301
Renfro, Jeff	183
Richetti, Vee	71
Roberts, Fletcher	226
Robinson, Tamara	352
Rodgers, Brian	224
Rodgers, Jack	0
Rodgers, Jeffrey	167
Rose, Billy	137
Rose, Jamie	201
Rutledge, Lisa	90
Saffold, Ethan	0
Sanford, Gary	479
Sherer, Jeremy	171
Sherrell, Jeff	163
Shin, Ye Jung	384
Sides, Dean	235
Simpson, Kevin	264
Sloane, Mike	109

Participant	Total
Smith, Daryl	254
Smith, Erin	266
Smith, Holly	0
Smith, Jason	170
Smith, Justin	0
Smith, Mimi	92
Soileau, Chester	0
Stephens, Cory	0
Stockton, Rick	180
Stone, Kayla	173
Tarabella, Abbie	0
Thomas, Marilyn	199
Thornton, Amanda	280
Townes, Janelle	97
Trimble, Jamie	143
Vick Jr., Gerald	261
Vinson, Matthew	67
Waddell, Chassi	205
Watkins, Tommy	200
Watters, Erin	174
Wende, Adam R	163
Whatley, Prince	104
Wheeler, Elizabeth	0
White Vick, Katie	294
White, Robin	231
Wiseman, Steve	269
Woodard, Larry	194
York, Gary	305

# SHOW US YOUR BTC GEAR



# Upcoming Events

EVENT	DATE	TIME
<a href="#">BTC Saturday Long and Moderate Run Groups</a>	March 7, 2026	6:00 a.m./6:30 a.m.
<a href="#">Grand Bohemian Village 2 Village 10k and 7.5 Mile Run</a>	March 7, 2026	8:00 a.m.
<a href="#">Oak Mountain Color Run (5k/1 Mile)</a>	March 7, 2026	8:00 a.m.
<a href="#">BTC Saturday Long and Moderate Run Groups</a>	March 14, 2026	6:00 a.m./6:30 a.m.
<a href="#">The Bell Center 5k and Children's Run</a>	March 14, 2026	8:00 a.m.
<a href="#">The 12th Annual Judy M. Merritt Memorial 5k &amp; Family Fun Run</a>	March 14, 2026	9:00 a.m.
<a href="#">Tour de Brewers XXIV – St. Patrick's Day Edition</a>	March 14, 2026	11:00 a.m.
<a href="#">BTC Saturday Long and Moderate Run Groups</a>	March 21, 2026	6:00 a.m./6:30 a.m.
<a href="#">The Indy 5k at Barber Motorsports Park</a>	March 27, 2026	5:30 p.m.
<a href="#">BTC Saturday Long and Moderate Run Groups</a>	March 28, 2026	6:00 a.m./6:30 a.m.
<a href="#">Rumpshaker 5k and 1 Mile Fun Run</a>	March 28, 2026	8:00 a.m.
<a href="#">BTC Statue to Statue 15k *BTC Race Series* *BTC Member Discount*</a>	April 4, 2026	8:00 a.m.
<a href="#">BTC Saturday Long and Moderate Run Groups</a>	April 11, 2026	6:00 a.m./6:30 a.m.
<a href="#">Highlands College Half Marathon, 10k, and 5k (Fultondale)</a>	April 11, 2026	7:00 a.m.
<a href="#">Cookie Fix 5k/10k and Kids' 200-yard dash (Vestavia Hills)</a>	April 11, 2026	7:45 a.m.
<a href="#">16th Annual Mutt Strutt 5k and Fun Run</a>	April 11, 2026	8:00 a.m.
<a href="#">BTC Saturday Long and Moderate Run Groups</a>	April 18, 2026	6:00 a.m./6:30 a.m.
<a href="#">St. Elias Cedar Run – 5k and 1 Mile</a>	April 18, 2026	8:00 a.m.
<a href="#">20th Annual UAB National Alumni Scholarship Run – 5k and 1 Mile Fun Run</a>	April 18, 2026	8:00 a.m.
<a href="#">BTC Saturday Long and Moderate Run Groups</a>	April 25, 2026	6:00 a.m./6:30 a.m.
<a href="#">20th Annual Spring Scramble 5k</a>	April 25, 2026	5:30 p.m.
<a href="#">BTC Saturday Long and Moderate Run Groups</a>	May 2, 2026	6:00 a.m./6:30 a.m.
<a href="#">We Love Homewood 5k, 1 Mile, and Fun Run</a>	May 2, 2026	7:30 a.m.
<a href="#">Kitty Kat Haven &amp; Rescue 5k Meow-A-Thon and 1-Mile Whisker Walk (Hoover)</a>	May 2, 2026	8:00 a.m.
<a href="#">Queen Bee 5k and 10k (with separate stroller divisions)</a>	May 2, 2026	2:00 p.m.

BTC discounts are applied automatically for all current BTC members when registering through RunSignUp. Need to join or renew your membership? [Click here!](#)

Need to add a race (actual or virtual) to the calendar?  
[Email Webmaster Kabeer Ahmed](#), or visit the BTC website to [submit your race](#).



**BECOME A BTC MEMBER!**  
**FOLLOW THE QR CODE**

