

39th Hit-N-Run Pee-Wee Run set for Sunday morning

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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ALTON – One of the biggest – and oldest - youth running events in the Riverbender area is about to take place.

For the 39th time, area youngsters up to age 14 will be taking part in the Alton Road Runners Club's best-known event, the Hit-N-Run Pee-Wee Run beginning at 8 a.m.

Sunday at Alton's Gordon Moore Park. The event, the nation's oldest event of its type, consists of a quarter-mile run for youngsters aged 6 and under and a half-mile run for kids aged 7-14. Day-of registration will be available; the fee to take part is \$5, with some 130 runners having already signed up for the run, with the registration fee covering a T-shirt and drink for participants.

The Pee-Wee Run is the second jewel of the club's annual Summer Running Series; this year's series got under way June 10 with the 21st Alton Memorial Hospital Family Run at Godfrey's Glazebrook Park and concludes Aug. 6 with the 22nd Dash-N-Splash track run and pool party at EAWR's Memorial Stadium track and The Aquatic Center next door to EAWR.

“Hit-N-Run does a great job with the Pee-Wee Run,” said Road Runners Club president and East Alton-Wood River track/cross-country coach Russ Colona. “We've had kids who ran it and who brought their kids to take part; now we've got the kids of the kids who ran it when their parents brought them to the run after they took part in it now coming out for the run.”

In addition to the runs, there will be a post-run raffle for the participants; everyone will come away with a prize of some sort. “There will be a lot of prizes available, including six bicycles, for the kids,” Colona said.

Not only has Hit-N-Run convenience stores been a part of the event from the start, the event has had volunteers who have helped stage the run for many years, something Colona is very grateful for. “We have a lot of great volunteers who have helped us with the run for a long time,” Colona said. “They come early to set up everything and then take it down afterwards.”

The early start allows those who wish to, be able to attend church services later in the morning. “We'll be done by nine so anyone who wants to can go to church,” Colona said.