

CARMICHAEL RUNNING CLUB HISTORY

With help from parent volunteers, advice from local running gurus and commitment from local companies, the Carmichael Running Club took off in the fall of 2009.

In the spring of 2008, when my son Ryan was 7 years old, he participated in the Veggie Chase. It was his first 5K (3.1 miles) race. Ryan loved running the shorter kids runs, generally 1 mile or less, and wanted to try a 5K. His mother and I agreed but with the condition that we spend time training since it was much farther than he had ever run.

Race day came and we were off with hundreds of other runners, many who were kids. Young kids know the word "race", here the word "go" and take off as fast as they can, not realizing the distance they are running is much farther than they can even see. That instinct is not unusual and Ryan was no different, except I was running with him and held him back. So many kids took off so fast that Ryan said to me, "Can we pick up the pace"? Mind you we weren't at the ½ mile mark yet. I let him know that it was a long race and after 2 miles we could go faster if he felt good. Instead we kept an even pace. It wasn't long before we started passing kids. There was a boy about 10 years old that we caught up to. When we reached him he took off fast. Ryan's instinct was to chase him down. Again, I held him back and took the opportunity to coach. I reminded him we run our race at our pace. We caught that same boy several times before the 2 mile mark, each time it took less time to reach him and Ryan understood the boy was getting tired. The 5th time we caught him the boy pulled away and 20' later pulled over and threw up. Only another 20' further and a girl, about 12 years old, was also getting sick. (we did ask if both were okay before continuing) "That's why we train and run our own race at our pace", I told him.

We did pick up the pace at the 2 mile mark and Ryan loved the experience. He hasn't stopped running since. During that next year I couldn't stop thinking about how much fun Ryan was having and how unfortunate it would be if his first experience was similar to the two kids we saw get sick. I figured there had to be other kids that liked to run and how seemingly easy it would be to train them so they could have a fun time running. I enlisted a group of parents who were willing to help, companies that were willing to sponsor, and guest coaches that were willing to teach various aspects of running. In the fall of 2009 we held our first training session with 18 kids.

They all successfully participated in the Davis Turkey Trot. Many of those same kids continue to run with the club today. There is a 7-week training session in the fall and another in the spring. Over 100 kids have run with the club since the first training session.