

Frontrunners

For other uses, see [Frontrunner \(disambiguation\)](#).

International Front Runners (Frontrunners) is an umbrella organization of [LGBT running](#) and [walking clubs](#) around the world. The walking clubs are called [Frontwalkers](#).^[1]

1 Activities

Most Front Runners clubs host one or more weekly fun runs. Following a 30-year tradition, members typically gather afterwards at a local restaurant.

Many of the larger clubs host social events such as potluck dinners and annual banquets; participate as a team in distance relays and international LGBT sporting events such as [Gay Games](#), [World Outgames](#), and [EuroGames](#); and elect officers, have bylaws and a membership-dues structure.

A growing interest in [walking](#) has led some Front Runners clubs to add “Frontwalkers” to their club name.

2 Name variation

There are three different spellings of the organization name: [Front Runners](#), [FrontRunners](#) and [Frontrunners](#).

3 History

The first FrontRunners club was formed in San Francisco in January, 1974 by Jack Baker and Gardner Pond. It started as an “introduction to jogging” group listed in the bimonthly publication of “Lavender U”, which was organized to serve the gay and lesbian community. “Classes” such as creative writing, ballroom dancing, learning to play bridge, etc., were listed. Jack and Gardner were members of San Francisco’s DSE Running Club and modeled the Lavender U Joggers after it. The group met every Sunday at 10AM at a different scenic location. In 1978, Lavender U ceased to exist and the then-leader of the Lavender U Joggers, Bud Budlong, held a series of reorganization meetings that resulted in the group renaming itself “FrontRunners.” The new name was inspired by Patricia Nell Warren’s 1974 novel *The Front Runner*, about a gay track coach and a gay runner. Bylaws were

written, dues were established, and the first election of officers was held in January, 1979. Several years later, the group changed its weekly run to Saturday at 9 AM at Stowe Lake in Golden Gate Park.

The second FrontRunners club was formed early in 1980 when Malcolm Robinson, a runner and employee of New York Road Runners, organized a gay running club and modeled it after the FrontRunners. He called it FrontRunners New York. Soon after, the Los Angeles Front Runners was formed. After the first Gay Games, held in San Francisco in 1982, many Front Runners clubs were organized throughout the United States and around the world.

Patricia Nell Warren, known as “Patches” to her Los Angeles Front Runners family, frequented the Los Angeles runs and annual dinners held by the LA group and participated in the annual Christopher Street West parade as part of the LA Front Runners contingent during the 1990s, thanks to then-president Marty Freedman and then-executive board member Kevin and Don Norte.

The International Front Runners was created and became a more formal body by drafting and adopting a mission statement and constitution at the Front Runners International Front Runner Forum in 1999.

4 Clubs around the world

There are over 100 Front Runners clubs worldwide, about half of which are in the United States.^[2]

- Chicago Frontrunners and Frontwalkers, inducted into the [Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame](#) in 1995.^{[3][4]}
- San Francisco Front Runners, since 1974, [LGBT Running and Walking Club Welcoming Everyone of All Abilities!](#) ^[5]
- Front Runners New York Running Out Front Since 1979^[6]
- Los Angeles ^[7]
- Sydney Front Runners, since 1983 ^[8]
- Front Runners Toronto, since 1987 ^[9]
- London Front Runners : a running club for lesbians, gay men and transgender & gay-friendly people who love running.^[10]

- Manchester Frontrunners : founded in 2005, a friendly LGBT running club who welcome all people of all abilities.^[11]
 - Glasgow^[12]
 - Dublin Front Runners 'Running With Pride' since 2005^[13]
 - Paris Front Runners, since 1992^[14]
 - Cologne^[15]
 - Marseille : “Contre les discriminations, faisons du sport ensemble”^[16]
 - Front Runners Nice^[17]
 - Lyon^[18]
 - Stockholm Frontrunners:^[19]
- [15] www.frontrunners.org
 - [16] www.frontrunnersmarseille.org/
 - [17] www.frontrunnersnice.org/
 - [18] frontrunnerslyon.free.fr/nousconnaitre/index.html
 - [19] stockholmfrontrunners.com
 - [20] Cho, Alexander. “Passion Play”. *Frontiers*. Retrieved July 1, 2011.

8 External links

- frontrunners.org
- fsgl.org

5 Famous Front Runners

- Actor George Takei met his husband Brad Altman during an LA Front Runners run in the 1980s.^[20]

6 See also

- Gay community
- Fédération sportive gaie et lesbienne

7 References

- [1] <http://www.frfwchicago.org/>
- [2] www.frontrunners.org
- [3] <http://www.glhalloffame.org/index.pl?page=inductees&todo=year>
- [4] <http://www.frfwchicago.org/>
- [5] www.sffr.org
- [6] www.frontrunners.org
- [7] www.lafrontrunners.com
- [8] www.sydneyfrontrunners.org/Sydney_Frontrunners/Welcome.html
- [9] frontrunnerstoronto.ca/
- [10] londonfrontrunners.org/
- [11] manchesterfrontrunners.org/
- [12] glasgowfrontrunners.org
- [13] dublinfrontrunners.ie/wp/
- [14] www.frontrunnersparis.org/