

PHOTOGRAPH BY KIM KOMENICH



Band On The Run

For the fifth straight year, dozens of musicians from the UC-Berkeley Marching Band will perform as they run. Among them (from left): Nathan Stelman, 21, Jennifer Van Heuit, 22, and Robert Collins, 21.

The Party Animal

Burch Thomsen, 35, a Hibernia Bank vice president from San Francisco, typifies the fun runner. For six years he has made the race the main attraction of a week-end-long bash for friends from all over the West.

The Masked Man

John Hearney, 38, an Oakland general contractor, may be the most famous of the thousands of costumed runners. His gimmicks — always tall — range from this giraffe to a redwood tree to Coit Tower.

The Jogging Enthusiast

Mike Conroy, 41, a Daly City water inspector, plans to make this his 23rd Breakers in a row (his first was in 1964, when only 124 people finished). Like most Breakers runners, he uses the race as an annual fitness test, a reason to stay in shape.

A MOST UNUSUAL SUNDAY CONGREGATION

Here's a sampling of the devotees who have turned Breakers into an event with mass appeal



The Nonagenarian

Ivor Welch, a Pacifica great-grandfather, passed his 91st birthday in January. He is the oldest runner in the race and perhaps the most inspirational. This will be his eighth straight Breakers race.

The First Lady

Fran Conley, 45, a Woodside neurosurgeon, disguised herself in a long overcoat 20 years ago and entered the Breakers when females were not allowed. She was a winner in 1971 when the race was first opened to women.

Three Generations

The Buccis are one of many families running together, passing on the sport to each new generation. Framed here: Al, 68, Daly City; his son, Bob, 38, Pleasant Hill, and Bob's children Michelle, 14, Nicole, 12, Noelle, 9, and Mark, 7.

The Human Centipede

In 1978 Peanut Harms, 34, Los Altos, and Angel Martinez, 31, Tarzana, pioneered the concept of 13 runners linked together. Now there are scores of centipedes competing in outrageous costumes, but the Aggies are still the fastest.