

The Marsh Island Trail Runners *present*

TUCARD 2026

The Terrifically (& Unnecessarily) Complicated Adventure Race and Duathlon

*A Fundraiser for Public Land Access & Maine's Private Land Ethic
and a cross-country race that thrives on being a pain in your @\$@*

9:00 am, Saturday, September 12th, 2026



The Premise: This race has no course. It has a starting point, an ending point, and some as-yet-unrevealed number of waypoints in between. Your objective is to get from the start to all of the waypoints—in whatever order and whatever route you want—to the race finish using at least two human-powered means. So, really ... <dramatic music> ... *the whole world is your course*. Simple!

The Twist: You only know the start and end points now. The waypoint locations will be released sometime before day. There is no way to avoid last minute course planning in the TUCARD!!!

The Devil in the Details: But, oh for the love of all that is good and holy, THE RULES!!! Why? WHY?!!! The fastest racer *could* win TUCARD, but it hasn't happened yet. Much of the "fun" of this race is playing the system, which is outlined *in nauseating detail* in the rule book below. And just when you get those figured out, new rules will be released! Up to and potentially including the morning of the race!

To Register: Go to <https://www.marshislandtrailrunners.org/tucard>. Registration includes (for those who opt in) a one-year membership to the Orono Land Trust to help protect public land access for Maine!¹

¹ Winners will be awarded a free registration for TUCARD 2027. TUCARD is its own prize.



2026 COURSE

“flatland”

START CIRCLE: 44.89849°N, 68.68441°W
FINISH CIRCLE: 44.89150°N, 68.68413°W²

WAYPOINTS:

*Will be released some time before race day,
but information will only be released to registered racers.*

*To view all race spatial info, whenever it's released,
in a zoomable format with satellite views, register now:*

<https://www.runreg.com/tucard>

² You can paste these directly in most mapping programs (e.g. google maps), and they will show you a point

The Terrifically and Highly Necessary TLDR Rulebook³

*You're busy, we get it. This single page doesn't have all the rules for TUCARD, and following just these rules won't ensure you get your best time. But if you **do** follow **just** these rules, you **probably** won't get disqualified.*

TUCARD is easy!⁴ Just:

1. Start at the start.
2. Race "segments" to find each waypoint and collect the waypoint markers.
3. A new race segment begins (and the previous one ends) any time you:
 - a. Switch modes of locomotion
 - b. Switch from pavement to non-pavement or vice versa

Record the time and your mode of locomotion (e.g., on foot, bike, hot air balloon) any time either of these things change, either on vellum parchment with a well sharpened quill⁵ or with your digital tracking app (e.g., Strava)⁶. You must use at least two modes of locomotion (i.e., The "D" in TUCARD stands for *Duathalon*).

4. Know that the scorekeepers will take the time you spend on each "segment" described by #3 and multiply it by a time adjustment to calculate your final race time. Here are the multipliers that apply to each combination of locomotion style and surface type:

| Mode of Locomotion | Surface | |
|-------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| | Not Pavement | On Pavement |
| Running | x 1.00 | x 2.0 |
| Bike | x 1.50 | x 3.0 |
| Boat | x 0.50 | not possible |
| Swimming | x 0.25 | not possible |
| Hot Air Balloon | x 0.01 | not possible |
| Skates/Skis/Skateboard/Scoter | x 1.20 | x 2.4 |
| Helicopter / Ebike / Moped | DQ | DQ |

5. If you're racing as a team, designate one team member to be "on" during each segment, and only their times and locomotion count. *All* team members must meet up at every waypoint before moving on, and the final finish time is when the *last* team member crosses the finish circle.
6. Pay close attention to the rules released at the last minute so you don't get eaten by the Sparkle Pony.
7. Finish at the finish. Even if you're Lebanese and not Finnish.
8. Turn in your waypoint markers.
9. Crack a beverage. Enjoy the post-race potluck. Make fun of your adventures. And wait weeks for the official results.

³ For those with short attention spans, busy lives, many ferrets that need constant attention, narcolepsy, dropsy, or *The Vapors*.

⁴ Like differential equations or Markov chains!

⁵ TUCARD, its employees, and all subsidiaries do not discriminate against vampires born in the 18th century.

⁶ You must have a digital track to get an official race score, and you probably need to read the Strava directions in more detail to pull that off.

The Complete T U C A R D 2 0 2 6 Official Rulebook

The Totally & Unnecessarily Complicated Part: There are a lot of rules. Like, a *lot* of rules. Too many rules. There's even one *super-secret surprise sparkle pony rule* that will be revealed just before the race.

Here are the rules that have popped up randomly since registration opened, but are still legally binding⁷:



A. You don't "Di" if you can still "Tri":

TUCARD requires that you use at least two means of locomotion during the race (diathalon?), but if you use at least *three* (triathalon) for at least 0.10 miles *each*, you will get 5 minutes taken off your race time.

B. Give them enough rope and they'll jump themselves:

A new mode of locomotion this year. If you are actively jump-roping, your locomotion time modifier is x0.25 (stay tuned for the appendix that defines "actively jump roping" in sufficient detail to flummox the loophole seekers).

C. Horse of a different color:

If you are the only racer to use any pre-approved mode of locomotion, the modifier on that mode of locomotion is x0.80. Modes of locomotion can be pre-approved by their inclusion as an official mode in this rulebook (anything listed here is automatically pre-approved) or through an email exchange before September 10th (marshislandtrailrunners@gmail.com). For pre-approved modes of locomotion that are not listed in the rulebook, you will be supplied with:

- (1) a movement modifier (e.g., x1.2, x2.3) that will apply if more than one racer uses the mode and
- (2) a formal definition of your mode.⁸ You will not be told whether the mode and its definition has been approved for any other racer.

- D. Nothing else yet, but they're coming! And will be updated here! If you have registered, we'll even email you when we add new rules. If you haven't done this race before, the "sparkle pony rule" is released at the very last moment, and ... it almost always has dire consequences worth paying close attention to (assuming you would like to do well, which is not required).

⁷ Except for the fact that they are in no way legally binding

⁸ The modes are defined by their pre-approved definition. Mode definition might, therefore, group together types of movement you would otherwise, as a sane human, consider to be different. For instance, if you requested "sack race" as a mode of locomotion, and your email application was approved, but you were given the formal definition of "at least two feet are bound together and must move as one", then, if you used it during the race and someone else did a three-legged race (and they were given the same definition as a result of their application), neither of you would get the x0.80 modifier since two racers used the locomotion as defined. You do not need to use a mode of locomotion, if you get one approved, and only used, approved locomotion types count for this rule. We recognize, right now, that making this rule is a horrible mistake, and appeals to this rule will lock up the results of TUCARD 2026 in the courts for the next decade at least.

And here are a few rules that have been around awhile but still apply

(For race veterans, rules marked with a star are new or changed this year relative to last year):

1. **You can use any means of locomotion that is human powered.** No engines, no fly wheels, no batteries, no dog sleds. Sails and pedals and paddles and feet are allowed.
2. **You must use *at least two* different modes of transport** (see: Duathlon). You can use more.
3. **Markers prove you completed the course.** At each waypoint you will find a pile of wooden markers. Pick one up. Hand them all in at the finish to prove you made it to all of the waypoints.
4. **There is a “pavement penalty”.** All of the time you spend on pavement, or running along a paved road (even if you’re on the berm) counts double. That means that if you run for five minutes along a paved road, your race time goes up by ten minutes. Ouch. Because we check your route for official scorekeeping via your GPS track, “pavement” is defined as anywhere within 10 feet of pavement as shown in the Google Maps Satellite View on race day. That means no planter hopping across parking lots to avoid the penalty.⁹
5. **Because the chicken had her reasons.** If you are only on pavement for 40 feet or less (i.e., the width of a typical road crossing) you don’t have to count the pavement penalty. Don’t abuse this please. If you cross a road, then go into the woods for three feet and then go back to the road for 40 feet and keep doing that again and again to avoid the pavement penalty (or anything similarly nefarious), the race organizers will be annoyed and just disqualify you for being a pain in the butt.
6. **There are time adjustments based on your means of locomotion.**
 - a. On foot = time x 1.0 (i.e., regular time)
 - b. On bike = time x 1.5
(e.g., 1 min biking adds 1.5 min to final time)
 - c. In a boat = x 0.50
 - d. Swimming = x 0.25
 - e. In a hot air balloon = time x 0.001
(mostly we just want to see someone try this)
 - f. On skates / skis / skateboard / scoter = x 1.2



⁹ This rule dedicated to James Jackson Sanborn following TUCARD 2020.

~~g. Portaging = time x 0.5¹⁰~~

★ ~~h. Rucking = time x 0.80¹¹~~

i. In a helicopter = disqualified (see rule # 1)

If you have some movement method you want to use, and it's not listed here, just let us know. We'll figure out an adjustment for you, or we'll tell you it's not allowed because we can't be bothered to figure out one.

7. **Pavement and locomotion adjustments compound.** So, if you bike on a paved road for a minute, you get three minutes added to your running time (because 1.0 minute x 2.0 pavement penalty x 1.5 bike adjustment = 3.0 minutes added to your race time). Likewise, if you scull your crew shell up Main Street for 10 minutes, you get 10 minutes added to your race time (because 10 minutes x 2.0 pavement penalty x 0.50 boat adjustment = 10 minutes). Which is a lot better than the 20 minutes it would cost you for *running* up Main Street, so that's a really great way to erase the pavement penalty!

8. **Locomotion adjustments do not compound with each other¹².** Each mode of locomotion has a single adjustment, and if you're on pavement, it doubles. That's it. So, if you are roller skating on your paddle board while your teammate carries the board, that does *not* mean your adjustment is 1.25 for skating x 0.5 for boating x 0.5 for portaging. This race is enough of a circus without *that* insanity.

★ Although this year the "horse of a different color" rule means you *could* apply for a new locomotion style of "roller skating on a paddle board carried by others", if you were into that kind of thing.

9. **Teams are encouraged.** Sometimes there are special team rules that get released later. Sometimes there aren't. Teams who race together always seem to have more fun though. Fun is encouraged. All team members must start the race at the starting circle, and teams may not leave any waypoint until *all* of their members have arrived. This means that dividing and conquering the waypoints is a no-no. That being said, it's easier to paddle your canoe down Main Street with a friend. Final team times are determined by the *last* team member to cross the finish circle.

10. **Designated Driver.** Teams must designate one member as the active racer during each segment. The mode of transport, route of travel, and time adjustments only apply to the designated team member during that segment. All the rules still apply to the designated racer, but the non-active racers are off the hook for that segment (break out the dog sleds!). All team members must still reach all waypoints together (Rule #9), but, for example, if the designated racer is running, and the other teammates are all on bikes pulled by robo-dogs with engines, the team is not disqualified (and there is also no bike penalty). Also, one team member may be racing while the others are engaged with arranging future logistical hurdles (e.g., napping), so long as everyone meets up again at the next waypoint before proceeding on with the race.

11. **Wind beneath your pedal-powered wings.** Racers are allowed to have an (unregistered) support team. Not just for cheering, either. Non-racers can pace or assist with any navigation or logistics (e.g.,

¹⁰ The portage rule is retired in honor of Mara Scallon's uninflated packraft from TUCARD 2023.

¹¹ The now-retired "rucking" rule was initially made in memory of Matthew Tomasko's inflatable donut floaty from TUCARD 2024.

¹² This rule commemorates Anthony Diba biking down Forest Ave with his daughter in a backpack during TUCARD 2021.

bringing boats or bikes between segments), so long as the racer's speed isn't directly impacted. So, for example, no piggybacks, holding up one end of a portaged boat, or blowing really hard on their backs.

- 12. Keep track of your own route segments.** Because of the complicated timing rules, we require everyone (or every team) to fill out a route worksheet that we'll use to calculate your final race time. Your total route will be made up of "segments". Each segment of your route will end and a new one will begin any time that you:
- Switch your mode of locomotion (e.g., go from biking to running or sailing to paragliding)
 - Move onto or off of pavement.

For each segment, a line on the worksheet will record the start time, the type of locomotion used, and whether or not the segment was on pavement. An example worksheet is attached to the end of the rule book as APPENDIX A to give you an idea of what it might look like. The precise format may change depending on what the new race rules are for this year, however. So, as in most things TUCARD, don't get too comfortable with your comfort level. Regardless, the whole bookkeeping exercise will probably be easiest if you use a running app (e.g., Strava) and follow those instructions listed in APPENDIX B, and then you can just fill out the worksheet once you finish.

- 13. Final race times will only be official if there is digital proof.** At the end of the race, we'll take your worksheet and start working up the scoring. Racers who have a digital track record and the starting times for each segment (e.g., on a running app or with a GPS unit) will be eligible for an "official" score and be in the running for the cash prize. We'll calculate an unofficial race time for anyone who hands in a worksheet, but you can't win unless your time is *official*, and your time is only official if you can digitally prove where you were during your segments! **NOTE:** this means that if you use a running app to track your route segments, and you forget to hit start at any point, or the app crashes, or your battery dies, or you are attacked by Russian hackers, you cannot win this race. So, if you are a competitive soul, maybe bring two devices. Unless you feel lucky, punk. For instructions on how to use Strava to record an official time (which is highly encouraged), see APPENDIX B.

Please note that starting one segment and starting a new one in some exercise apps takes time (not if you follow the Strava instructions in APPENDIX B, however!), but time adjustments are applied to the elapsed time between the start of one segment and the *start* of the subsequent segment (or your race finish time, for the last segment). Thus, any time between the stop of one segment and the start of the next segment will receive the time adjustment of the *previous* segment.

- 14. Race like a confused squirrel.** The route is approximately 3.4 miles as the crow flies from start to finish, but who wants to race like a crow? That's boring.¹³ It will vary considerably year to year, but the *winning* routes have generally been between 8 and 12 miles in length. And of course there is always some truly adventurous soul competing for the "lost dog" award. The Lost-est Dog ever in TUCARD

¹³ This rule is in no way a slam on Crow Athletics or Gary Allen, who is a darling gem of the Maine race community. But this race is going to be more fun than running on the Golden Road in December with a below-zero wind chill, and more entertaining than running around and around and around in circles on a tiny island for 50 kilometers. Just saying. It won't, however, be as potentially life threatening as running the New York Marathon during Superstorm Sandy. He's got us there.

history traveled 17.5 miles, which was over *six times* the distance of the crow route that year. Can you beat that? Bring snacks, if you're going for it.

15. **Winner-winner-chicken-dinner.** The racers with the fastest official time in each race class to complete the course after all penalties and adjustments will be awarded a free registration for next year's TUCARD. They can also write "winner" on their race t-shirt in sharpie with impunity. Winners will be designated in the following race categories: Open Gender, Female, Male, and Team.

16. **Fast Food.** There will be a pot-luck BBQ¹⁴ at the end. If you bring a dish, you get 5 minutes off your race time!! To qualify, the dish must be appropriate to share with others and demonstrate you planned ahead of time. Your racing gels or water bottle backwash DO NOT COUNT. If you show up with a bag of chips, it counts just like it would for a regular potluck, you get credit, but also a lot of thinly veiled judgement. Beverages and grills will be provided. And stories and laughter. And no expectations for race results, because it's going to take us a million years to figure out who won.



¹⁴ New Englanders will recognize that this term, "BBQ", does not guarantee there will be any actual BBQ sauce, just meat and veggie-based meat-imitations cooked on hot metal. Southerners will be confused. Missourians will be pissed that BBQ was just assigned to "the South". The French will laugh heartily at the silly Americans. But it's a potluck, so you can really define it however you'd like to if you bring it.

APPENDIX A

TUCARD 2017

The Terrifically (and Unnecessarily) Complicated Scoring Sheet EXAMPLE

Name: Brumbaugh Fergusson the Faint-hearted

Starting Time: 09:00:00

Finish Time (unofficial): 11:09:51

Digital platform: Strava

Username (if applicable): "@F8-Hearted"

RACE SEGMENTS

| Starting time (hh:mm:ss) | Pavement? (Y/N) | Locomotion Type? | Digital Track? (Y/N) |
|---|-----------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| 09:00:00 | N | Running | Y |
| 09:25:01 | Y | Biking | Y |
| 09:31:21 | N | Swimming | Y |
| 09:37:12 | N | Running | Y |
| 10:47:22 | Y | Dancing w/the Pony | Y |
| 10:55:56 | N | Running | Y |
| 11:00:56 | N | Three-legged Race | Y |
| | | | |
| In this example, Sir Fergusson took off running on a dirt track, then jumped on a road bike to dash to the river, which he swam across to another trail. He then ran a series of different dirt trails for 70 min 10 sec, ran down a paved road for 8 min 34 secs following the insane Sparkle Pony Rule for that year, and then ran another five minutes on one last trail before meeting up with his logistics partner to conduct a 3-legged race (a special locomotion type for that year) over the finish line. | | | |
| | | | |

You can either 1) hand in this scoresheet at the finish line or 2) email it to MarshIslandTrailRunners@gmail.com before 11:59 pm on Saturday, September 25th, 2017. Official digital tracks must also be received by that deadline to qualify for an official score and the race prizes. If you use Strava and follow the instructions provided, you just have to hand in this scoresheet and upload your data to Strava by the deadline.

APPENDIX B

So you hate pen and paper? Hate stopping your race to write things down? Are you one of those people who only owns an electric can-opener? One that has Bluetooth and is internet enabled? We get it. Well, no, no we don't. But we'll accommodate it.

Here's one suggestion of how to keep track of your TUCARD details on the fly and get an official score time and potentially qualify for a race prize.

What to do before race day:

1. If you are not already a user, download Strava:
[for your iPhone](https://apps.apple.com/us/app/strava-run-ride-swim/id426826309) - <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/strava-run-ride-swim/id426826309>
[for your Android phone](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.strava) - <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.strava>
2. Join the Marsh Island Trail Runners Club by going to [our Strava Club page](https://www.strava.com/clubs/marshisland)
<https://www.strava.com/clubs/marshisland>
3. [RSVP to the TUCARD](#) by clicking on "I'm in"
If you have your [privacy permissions](https://www.strava.com/settings/privacy) (<https://www.strava.com/settings/privacy>) set so that the setting for Activities is "everyone", then this is all you have to do for us to see what you record on Strava for the race.
4. If you have your privacy permissions set so that the setting for Activities is "followers", then you need to follow "[Brian Olsen](https://www.strava.com/athletes/10631219)" (<https://www.strava.com/athletes/10631219>), our official scorekeeper, so he can see your activities. Actually, it will be easier for him to find your stuff if you follow him on Strava regardless. He'll probably follow you back. He's friendly like that. You can delete him after the race, if you want. Strava won't tattle on you, so he won't cry in his beer that night.
- ★5. Make sure you have the "hide beginning and end of my run" option in permissions turned OFF or we won't be able to see the beginning and end of your race and none of the times will line up with reality.
6. Make sure your settings have auto-pause turned off for both biking and running (we can figure out the scoring if you don't do this, but it will be easier if you do).
7. Consider turning your "flyby" viewing setting in your privacy permissions to "everyone", because they are so cool to watch for this race. If you've never seen flybys, if you go to the web version of Strava, you can see an animated map with all the other Strava racers and watch the route they took relative to yours for the entire race. We get an unnatural amount of enjoyment watching people get lost.

What to do on race day:

1. Use a single Strava activity for the entire race and ALL of your segments.¹⁵ The Strava track is a record of where you were when, so we can proof your route and pavement coverage.
2. Then you have two options for recording the start times for each of your segments.

¹⁵ Please consider using a Strava activity type that isn't running or biking, so you don't inadvertently set a running segment record on your bike (or things similar) and bring down the wrath of the Strava community. May we recommend "kite surfing" as an appropriate TUCARD indicator that is unlikely to mess with the Strava segment leaderboards?

If you are using Strava on your phone:

- a. Make one Strava recording of your entire race route from beginning to end with all its modes of locomotion and various mixes of pavement and water and trails.
- b. Take a screenshot of your phone every time you start a new segment. This will record the time (write down, or do a great job remembering, your mode of locomotion and pavement switches).
- c. Record on your *paper scoresheet* (during or after the race) the segment start times from your screen shots as well as your mode of locomotion and whether or not you were on pavement for each segment.
- d. Hand in or email your scoresheet (as well as uploading your Strava data in a way that we can see) for your official score.

If you are using a gps watch¹⁶ that uploads to Strava:

- a. Make one recording of your entire race route from beginning to end with all its modes of locomotion and various mixes of pavement and water and trails.
- b. Press your lap button every time you start a new segment to record the time (write down, or do a great job remembering, your mode of locomotion and pavement switches).
- c. Upload your watch data to Strava.
- d. Record on your *paper scoresheet* the segment start times as well as your mode of locomotion and whether or not you were on pavement for that segment. If you are using Strava to calculate the segment starts, the app records “splits” both from watch lap times *and* whenever you travel a mile since your last lap start (you can see these data by clicking on “view workout” under the “workout analysis” section of your activity in the mobile app). To calculate a segment start longer than a mile will thus require some simple addition. So for instance, if you ran a segment that was 1.25 miles long before hitting the lap button, Strava will show you the time spent on the first mile and the time spent on the remaining 0.25 of that segment. You’ll need to add those two together. Your watch may have an easier way to do this outside of Strava, but this is how we’ll proof your math from your uploaded Strava data.
- e. Hand in or email your scoresheet (as well as uploading your Strava data in a way that we can see) for your official score.

¹⁶ Or at least all of the watches we are familiar with. If you are planning on using a watch, you should probably double check that these instructions work for your watch before race day.

What about Strava “quirks”?

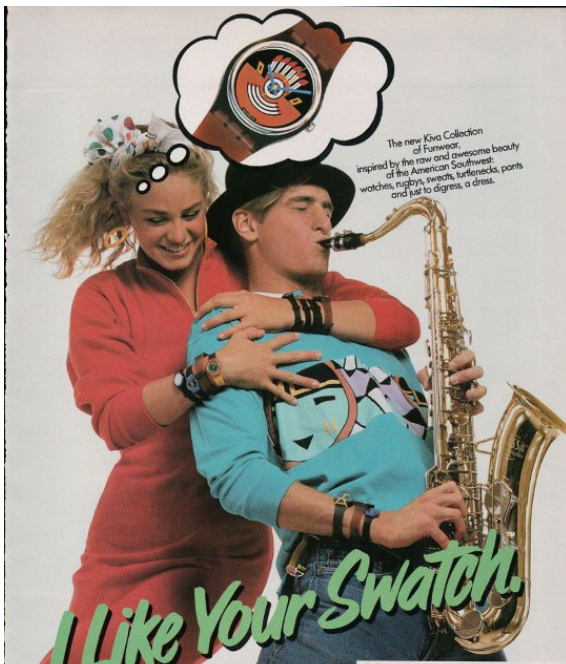


Figure 1. Wearing multiple watches gives you style points. Running in a sweatshirt dress or with a saxophone and a porkpie hat does as well.

Ok, Strava isn't perfect. No exercise app is. Rarely, Strava even totally bonks and draws straight lines between points multiple miles away from each other, although this is sometimes related to the “auto-pause” option, which you should not have on for this race (please)¹⁷. But! If you are worried about these weird Strava quirks, which for the record *will definitely invalidate your official scoring*, then please bring two means of keeping track of your route. If you wear four or five GPS swatches up your arm, like a gnarly 80's radster, you will receive extra style points. Style points don't help your race times, but they make you feel cooler (see Fig. 1).

What Strava does do *often* is give you a slightly different pace or distance depending on what phone you have. The GPS algorithm for any device is always an estimate, as it draws straight lines between points with some wiggle for extra measure. For instance, if you run as a team and you all record in Strava, chances are you'll all end up with slightly different distances and paces calculated. Luckily, for this race, we don't care about distance. Check out the

score card (APPENDIX A). Did we even ask about distance? NO! We care about *time* and *locomotion mode* and *route* (because of pavement). Strava will do that consistently, no matter how awful your phone is. Well, if it's a flip phone we might have issues, not the least of which is that you can't download the app.¹⁸ Because of this scoring method, all teammates should have the same data if they hit start and stop at the same time (to be clear: we only need one official digital route and scoresheet from a team, this is just an illustration of how superior our scorekeeping rules are over Strava's algorithm).

We recommend using Strava because we think it will be easier¹⁹, but you are welcome to use some other way to record your digital track to get an official finish score. The point is to be able to prove that you were only on pavement when you said you were and that you changed locomotion modes at the times you said you did on the scoresheet. If your favorite digital method lets you show us that, you are probably good to go, but ask us if you have any doubts. And if you could give two shakes of a lamb's tail about an official score, than just give us the paper. We'll still tell you where you placed. Works for us. You just can't win the free race entry for next year. You'll know you're the real winner.

¹⁷ In our experience it's more often related to jumping in the car after a run and forgetting to hit stop. Stupidity is not an excuse for Strava errors and will invalidate your official timing.

¹⁸ You will not receive style points for having a flip phone.

¹⁹ And because we are angling for corporate sponsorship and the scorekeeper has tied his self-esteem to his Strava follower number.