

# TRAIL **ATRA** TIMES

American Trail Running Association • Volume 13, No. 43 • spring 2008

*Mission: To represent and promote trail and mountain running.*

## Newbie on the Trails

by James Vander Hooven

A couple of years ago, I signed up for my first 5k race. Having never trained other than a couple of unproductive and gasping jogs, I showed up ready to race on a cold fall morning. I promptly saw about 50 runners who knew what they were doing. I got back in my car and left. I didn't even try to start the race.

Flash forward to 2007. I had been running much more, which means two jogs per week each lasting about 20 minutes or so. I desperately wanted to participate in a trail running race. So I happened on the whitemountainmilers.com site and thought, "I'm going to run in the Cranmore Hill Climb." I later found out from Paul Kirsch, the race director, that I was the first registrant. That should have been the first sign that I was too eager! My wife Jennie and I showed up at Cranmore the day before the race and I saw the big sign: **USA Trail Running Championships**. My first trail race!!

I wasn't going to be dismayed this time. We decided to hike the course just to see what I'd be in for the next morning. We went up the steep part and down the *not-so-steep* part. The entire course was steep all three times around. Everything else was backwards about my experience so far; why not hike the course backwards? As we *climbed* up the black diamond slope, we happened to see Paul Kirsch dropping course flags. He had the audacity to tell us that one of the top runners was from Europe- as in the continent. I think I laughed at myself until I fell asleep that night. Jennie was good enough

not to laugh at me out loud. The thought of not participating crossed my mind a thousand times.

I didn't give in to the doubt. I participated and even ran part of it! I finished in two hours two minutes fifty-six seconds. My goal was to finish in under death. I got looped twice by the winners. The first time they passed me, I even thought maybe they showed up late for the race but started anyway. But I conceded to their elite status and panted "nice work!" How I finished the race was never an issue for me. I did it and the seed was planted. And so was a permanent scar on my knee from my third lap digger. I've never been so proud of a scar in my life. But that's because I only have two scars (I earned the other one when I fell out of a tree as a kid). I also still have my running shorts with a gaping hole in the rear end. No scar or blood back there though. It wasn't that the scar on my knee was that big or remarkably deep- but it was there and it quickly became a badge of honor that I had completed this event.

I could barely move after the Cranmore Hill Climb but the sense of accomplishment was what boosted me all the way home to sign up for the Loon Mountain Race. That event didn't seem so bad until the final

ascent. The intense fog at the top of the mountain made it impossible to see how much further you had to go. That is psychologically unnecessary. Now I'm hooked and, while I have no dreams of competing for top-ten finishes or wins (yet), I enjoy every event. I even enjoyed the Sidehiller snowshoe race this year even though my snowshoes were about 10 times bigger than everyone else.

As the Vice President for Student Affairs at Lakes Region Community College in New Hampshire, my job can be fairly

stressful. I'm trying to finish my dissertation. My wife and I are expecting our first child in early March. And did I mention we're trying to buy a house? Now I run at least five days a week. My sanity comes from running and looking forward to more races.



Jim finishing Cranmore

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There is a hint of spring in the air, but perhaps it is more of a “tease” the way the mercury climbs one day and dips and dives the next. I was recently in New York for the USA 50 km Road Championships and on that particular weekend the temperatures in Denver rose to the mid 60s on Saturday and sunk into the lower 30s on Sunday with four to six inches of snow reported in the metro area. I was asked how we Colorado folk manage to deal with the fickle thermometer. I just shrugged my shoulders and smiled. I too am an Easterner, raised in Pennsylvania and remember that we had very distinct seasons. The winter was always cold and the snow remained on the ground for several weeks after it fell. The sun would come out intermittently, but never warmed up enough to melt the snow. As soon as April rolled around, the snow was gone and the flowers were blooming. In Colorado Springs, it snows one day and is typically gone within one or two days. The sun comes out and the snow melts. That was the rule it seemed...until this year. It has snowed, and snowed, and snowed some more. I have had patches of ice and snow in my yard for most of the winter. The trails have been icy and snow covered since mid-November. At least it seems that way. My friends and I have cursed the cold weather especially when we have a day resembling spring and we run in shorts, and the next day we awaken to snow, blustery cold, and temperatures in the single digits (like yesterday!) and we’re back in tights, wearing gloves, with layer upon layer of polypro. I suppose the mantra in Colorado for trail runners is expect the unexpected and if you’re not satisfied, wait five minutes and the weather will change. On my run today, the trails were clear, it was above freezing, the sun was shining, and the snow was melting. It’s due to be nice again tomorrow and then on Sunday, you guessed it...more snow. *Happy trails, Nancy*

## ATRA Race & Club Members

Contributors to this issue of *Trail Times* include:

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| <i>Central Mass Striders (CMS)</i>               | <i>Northfield Mountain Race</i>                    |
| <i>Danby Down and Dirty Trail Races</i>          | <i>O.C. Mudslingers</i>                            |
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| <i>Lean Horse Trail Races – 50 Mile/100 Mile</i> | <i>Topanga Turkey Trot</i>                         |
| <i>Long Island Greenbelt Trail 50K</i>           | <i>Trail Runners Club</i>                          |
| <i>Loon Mountain Trail Race</i>                  | <i>Tussey mOUntaiNBACK 50 Miler</i>                |
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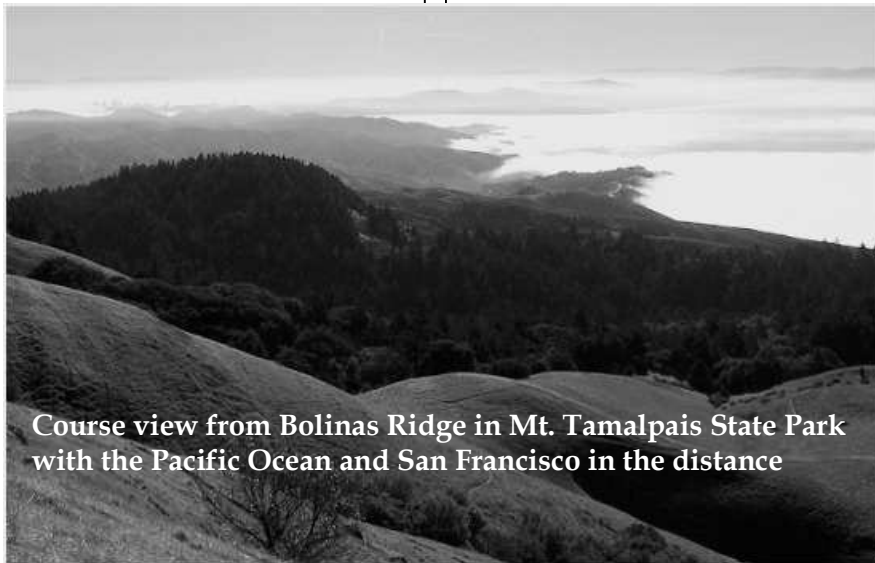
### GOALS OF ATRA

- ◆ Compile & publish a comprehensive listing of nationwide trail running events
- ◆ Educate and provide information about our sport to the rest of the outdoor community, to the media and to non-running entities that have similar goals and objectives
- ◆ Organize ATRA sponsored & supported events
- ◆ Be sensitive to the environment.
- ◆ Provide a forum whereby the business of the sport can be discussed and organized
- ◆ Create & nurture alliances with other associations

**Send your comments to:**  
**American Trail Running Association**  
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(719) 573-4408 fax  
trlrunner@aol.com  
[www.trailrunner.com](http://www.trailrunner.com)

Like many of us, I started running in college, yet I found it difficult to connect with the “atmosphere” of road running. After finishing my PhD, I relocated for a job in Vancouver, Canada and had access to a number of beautiful trails surrounding the University of British Columbia. I started running exclusively on trails after work and on weekends. As my enthusiasm continued for the challenges found with trail running, I took trips to some of the area’s ski resorts during the summer and participated in trail racing events on the weekends. During my transition to the trails, I quickly discovered the benefits on my mind and body that included a decrease in repetition injuries in my knees, significantly increased strength, fitness and endurance from climbing, and an improved stress release through a connection with nature. I realized by leaving the congestion and industrial feel of the roads to cars, and committing almost exclusively to trail running, I found an entirely new appreciation for running.

After years of participating in cycling, mountain biking, and trail running events, I decided to pursue my passion for trail running and start a new career to provide opportunities to athletes looking for trail events. In December, my wife and I started Sierra-Cascade Adventure Racing Sports (SCAR Sports) based in Sacramento.



Course view from Bolinas Ridge in Mt. Tamalpais State Park with the Pacific Ocean and San Francisco in the distance

We have spent time honing our mission statement, and have developed what we firmly believe will help guide us into a sustainable future. We are striving to utilize the diverse habitats found in California and have committed ourselves to creating the most scenic and diverse trail running events while giving the highest regard to the environment. To ensure we are reaching our self-

imposed goals to operate with the wellness of the environment in mind, we have begun to purchase carbon offsets. To ensure we are reducing our footprint on our natural resources, we will use only eco-friendly products that are renewable, recyclable and/or biodegradable and will endeavor to make our events as green as possible. Our initial focus has been to develop trail races within a few hours of Sacramento to include the Sierra-Nevada foothills, Napa Valley, the San Francisco Bay Area, Lake Tahoe and the southern deserts of California.

Our events will offer at least three to four course lengths for athletes of all levels and abilities. Most events will have a 5k and/or 10k option while our longest distance will reach 50k and will be designed to challenge the most experienced trail runners. This year we will offer two ultras, one in October and one in November.

For additional details, visit [www.scarsports.com](http://www.scarsports.com) or contact Trey at (916)-580-8780 or by email at [trey@scarsports.com](mailto:trey@scarsports.com).

**August 30, 2008**  
**Grand Teton Races—26.2M, 50M, 100M**  
**Alta, WY**  
**[www.tetonraces.com](http://www.tetonraces.com)**

*Held at the Grand Targhee Resort, the course is a cloverleaf loop (marathon add 1.2 mile section of trail), with 4,975ft climb per loop. Single-track, service roads, bike trails, and a short and scenic 3.2 mile stretch of pavement per loop.*

ATRA members at the \$35 level will receive a one-year subscription to *Trail Runner* magazine.

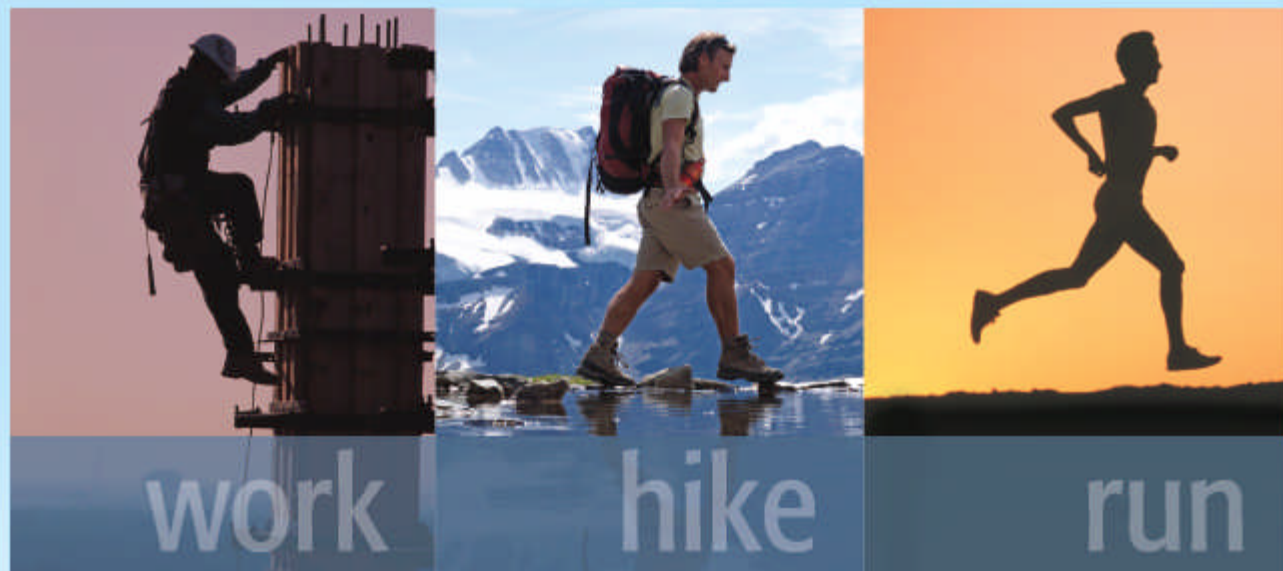
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**USATF Mountain and Trail Championships 2008**

**Trail Marathon Champs—June 8, Deadwood, SD**  
**Mountain Champs—June 21, Gorham, NH**  
**10km Trail Champs—June 29, Steamboat Springs, CO**  
**100 Mile Trail Champs—July 16, Lake Tahoe, CA**  
**50 Mile Trail Champs—July 28, Crystal Mtn, WA**  
**100km Trail Champs—August 18, Wilamette Pass, OR**





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Dietary supplements are a \$22-billion business in the United States – about the same size as the domestic wine industry. That’s a lot of pills and potions. You may wonder if any of the myriad supplements on the market can help you, as a trail runner, to perform better, or recover faster, or do something about your achy knees. The short answer – Yes (if you choose the right supplements and use them correctly). The longer answer, however, is that the majority of the supplements that you might be tempted to try are garbage. That’s a strong word, but I use it to emphasize the fact that most supplements on the market have little (if any) research to directly support their claims and many provide sub-optimal doses of low-potency ingredients that are unlikely to live up to your expectations. It’s a difficult task to wade through all the marketing mumbo-jumbo to find supplements that are worth your attention (and your dollars). At SupplementWatch, the health education company that I have run since 1999, we’ve been called the “Consumer Reports of supplements” because we help you to pick the products that are supported by research and most likely to do what they say.

Rather than providing a long discourse on which supplements don’t work and why (that would be a very long list), I’ll give you a shorter “to the point” checklist of how to approach choosing and using supplements along with a short list of supplements that any trail runner should consider (and why).

First – don’t believe any of the ads. It’s not that the advertisers are *lying* to you – but they certainly need to (and should) portray their products in the best possible light – so take those marketing claims and professional-athlete endorsements with a grain of salt. At SupplementWatch, we like people to become “open-minded skeptics” when it comes to claims – which means that you listen politely to the claims being made, but you remain skeptical (and keep your wallet in your pocket) until you can be satisfied that the promises are legit.

Second – look for supplements that are supported *directly* by research. By “directly” I mean that you want to see evidence that the supplement has been fed to humans (not rats, or mice, or test tubes) and a relevant outcome was measured (e.g. faster recovery, less muscle soreness, higher energy levels, etc). Ideally, this research should have been done on the actual finished product formulation – not on an isolated ingredient found in the product being marketed – and the subjects under study should be as like you as possible (runners or endurance athletes of some sort).

Third – consider the available supplements in “functional” terms (what they’ll do for you). As trail runners, we’re probably most interested in supplements to help us with endurance, recovery, and possibly with joint support (I’m leaving out multivitamins on purpose because that is an article in itself). Part of your functional considerations will be using the supplements the right way – so if a particular product says to take “2 scoops daily before exercise” – or “4 capsules after exercise” – or whatever, then you’ll want to follow those directions to maximize your chances of reaping the greatest benefits.

### What works for Endurance?

Aside from caffeine as an ergogenic aid to enhance endurance performance, there are four supplements that stand out from the crowd for their effectiveness – cordyceps (a Chinese mushroom), rhodiola (a Tibetan herb), eurycoma (a Malaysian root), and quercetin (a flavonoid antioxidant found in onions and apples). Although each of these supplements has evidence for improving oxygen delivery, or increasing blood flow, or boosting performance in endurance ath-

letes, there are only a handful of commercial products that have direct supporting research (on the final finished product): Cordy-max from Pharmanex (cordyceps), Energ-Ease from Wicked Fast (cordyceps, rhodiola, and eurycoma), and FRS Plus from New Sun (quercetin). Other products containing these ingredients have either never been studied, or they have been studied and shown to have no measurable benefits (possibly due to low levels or low-potency ingredients).

### What works for Recovery?

When it comes to post-exercise recovery, most of us understand the need to replace fluid, electrolytes, and glycogen (carbohydrates). Each of these needs is adequately (and deliciously) addressed with real foods like a PB&J sandwich and a glass of chocolate milk, but a variety of post-exercise recovery drinks are also available. None of these pre-made blends of carbohydrates/protein has been shown to be any “better” than regular foods, but in many cases they can be a lot more convenient, especially if you need to “grab and go” after your run. Accelerade and R4 (both from Motts) tout the “4:1” ratio of carbs:protein as the “ideal” post-exercise blend, but Powerbar’s (Nestle) range of post-exercise carb blends are also supported by good research evidence in endurance athletes. Going beyond the protein/carb drink mixes, are isolated amino acid formulas (glutamine, valine, leucine, isoleucine) such as Amino-Vital (Ajinomoto) and Recover-Ease (Wicked Fast) that have specific research evidence for reducing muscle soreness, preventing immune suppression, and accelerating tissue repair in endurance athletes.

### What works for Joint Support?

Even though trail running is less damaging to our knees than pounding the pavement, those miles can add up and result in some achy joints. Here is where we can use glucosamine (1500mg/day) to help rebuild joint cartilage; fish oil (1-3g/day) to help reduce inflammation; and proteolytic enzymes (50-100mg/day) like papain (from papayas) and bromelain (from pineapples) to help reduce soreness and scar tissue formation. Luckily, because each of these ingredients has reached “commodity” status within the nutrition industry, you can find a number of finished products that (inexpensively) meet the dosage suggestions above.

### Summary

Remember that dietary supplements are just that – products that are meant to *supplement* our other healthy diet and exercise choices. Swallowing a capsule will not turn a coach potato into a Scott Jurek or an Ann Trason, but when used correctly, the right supplements can add a new dimension to our training, racing, and enjoyment of trail running – and perhaps, to other aspects of our lives in terms of energy, recovery, and overall wellness. Visit SupplementWatch at [www.supplementwatch.com](http://www.supplementwatch.com) to see a full list of research studies on the supplements outlined in this article.

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*Shawn Talbott holds a MS in exercise physiology (UMass) and a PhD in nutritional biochemistry (Rutgers) and is an avid trail runner. Dr. Talbott is Research Director at SupplementWatch ([www.SupplementWatch.com](http://www.SupplementWatch.com)) and President of Wicked Fast Sports Nutrition ([www.WickedFastSportsNutrition.com](http://www.WickedFastSportsNutrition.com)). He runs the trails of the Wasatch range in Utah where he lives with his wife and two children.*

In November/December we conducted an online survey regarding **Trail Running Camps**. The following is a summary of the 54 responses we received which represented 29 states (the state with the most responses was CA) and two foreign countries.

- Average age — 35
- 25 Women; 28 Men (1 did not provide a gender response)
- The majority (61%) would like to attend a co-ed camp; only 8% would like to attend a camp with children who are at least 18 years of age, the remaining would like an adult-only camp with a few wanting to attend a camp for masters men or women.
- 87% would plan to attend a camp in the coming year; 13% were unsure
- 54% would like the camp to last 3-4 days; 37% would like the camp to last between 5 days and one week
- Location was the most important attraction when choosing to attend a camp followed by affordability and program format. Credentials (of the staff) and time of year were also important and duration of the camp less important.
- The majority (61%) were willing to pay \$500 or less; while 35% were willing to pay between \$501-\$1000. Seven (7) percent selected a price range of \$1001-\$1500. Only one person selected a price range between \$1500 and \$2000.
- Most respondents would like to attend a camp in their home states, while the next highest vote getters were Colorado, West Coast, and New England.
- Asked whether the respondent would like the camp as a vacation or learning experience, 59% chose learning experience while 41% chose vacation.
- Asked whether the respondent would like to have a time trial as part of the camp, 53% chose yes and 47% chose no.
- Asked how much time they would like to spend running each day, 50% listed 1-2 hours; 46% listed 3-5 hours and 4% listed five or more hours
- Respondents would like to learn about endurance, breathing, and uphill/downhill techniques, training and racing strategies, gear, nutrition and hydration, stretches, strength training, transitioning between various types of terrain, injury prevention, efficiency, and completing an ultra.

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[www.usmrt.com](http://www.usmrt.com)

The inaugural USATF Oregon Mountain Running Series will consist of four (4) existing races held at various sites around the state between June and September.

USATF Oregon has partnered with La Sportiva to provide series scoring and additional prizes for USATF members in open, master, senior, and veteran age groups. Modeled after the successful USATF New England Mountain Running Circuit, the Oregon series is designed to promote competition and increase awareness of the most scenic and challenging off-road running races the state has to offer. The races include:

**June 7, 2008**  
**Granite Man Mountain Run, 10 miles**  
**Jacksonville, OR**

The Granite Man is an exciting off-road event held at beautiful Applegate Lake nestled at 2,000 feet in the Rogue River National Forest. This is an exceptional 10-mile up & down mountain run that features a steep one-mile section of course that climbs 1000' of in elevation gain.

## MOUNTAIN RACING IN MONTANA

The Gnarly Dude(ette) Mountain Race series will be held in Montana this summer. To be eligible for series scoring, runners must complete four of the qualifying races in at least two regions, one qualifying race being 20 miles or longer. Points will be awarded based on a normalizing formula comparing the finisher's time to the age group winner's time in each of ten-year age groups. Schnee's Boot and Shoes will donate a pair of running shoes to the series winners (female/male). Other prizes are likely for such things as completing the most races, the most distance and whatever else sounds good and is supported by prizes. For complete details visit: [www.math.montana.edu/~thayes/Runs/Runs.html](http://www.math.montana.edu/~thayes/Runs/Runs.html) or contact by e-mail: [runski@bresnan.net](mailto:runski@bresnan.net)

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ATRA is a proud member of the following organizations



**August 2, 2008**

**Mt. Ashland Hillclimb Run, 13 miles**  
**Ashland, OR**

Now in its 31<sup>st</sup> year, the Mt. Ashland Hillclimb Run is the oldest continuously run mountain race in Oregon. Starting in downtown Ashland, this race climbs 5600' over 13 miles to finish on the summit of scenic Mt. Ashland. The course record at this race was set in 1986 by Los Angeles Marathon winner Ric Sayre (1:42). Dolores Bergman set the women's record in 2004 in a time of 2:13.39.

**August 30, 2008**

**Sunrise to Summit Race 3 miles**  
**Mt. Bachelor, OR**

Organized by the Mt. Bachelor Ski Education Foundation, the Sunrise to Summit may be the shortest race in the series but it is also the steepest. This uphill only course climbs 2600' in about 3 miles under ski lifts, thru volcanic rock strewn slopes to finally finish on the barren summit of Mt. Bachelor. The course records are held by Max King (35:32) and Jennifer Sventek (43:45).

**September 21, 2008**

**NW Mountain Running Championships, 7 miles**  
**Mt. Hood, OR**

This will be a brand new race from experienced race director Kevin "x-dog" Foreman. The 7-mile course will run both up and down the slopes of Mt. Hood from historic Timberline Lodge.

For more information on this series or for details about other mountain, ultra, and trail races in Oregon, visit: [www.usatf-oregon.org/MUT](http://www.usatf-oregon.org/MUT) or contact USATF Oregon's Mountain Ultra Trail Coordinator Richard Bolt at [richardabolt@gmail.com](mailto:richardabolt@gmail.com).

## Trail Racing in South Dakota

**June 8**

**Mickelson Trail Marathon\* and Half Marathon**  
**Deadwood, SD**

\*Host of the USA National Trail Marathon Championships  
[www.deadwoodmickelsontrailmarathon.com](http://www.deadwoodmickelsontrailmarathon.com)

**August 23**

**Lean Horse Trail Races—50 Mile/100 Mile**  
**Hot Springs, SD**  
[www.LeanHorse.com](http://www.LeanHorse.com)

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[www.runningtimes.com](http://www.runningtimes.com)



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# MOTIVATION

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