



-2022-

THUNDERBUNNY TRAIL RACES PARTICIPANT GUIDE



Table of Contents

Introduction.	3
Thunderbunny Weekend Schedule.	3
CHANGES IN 2022!	4
Packet Pickup.	4
Pre-Race Briefings.	4
Event Parking.	4
Camping.	5
Weather Note.	6
Course Breakdown.	6
Course Markings.	6
Aid Stations.	7
Drop Bags.	7
Cutoff Times.	8
Switching Distances.	8
Dropping Out During the Race.	8
Awards and Swag.	9
Collegiate Trail Running Championship.	9
Post-Race Food.	10
Bib #'s.	10
Turtlehead Cave Bib Punch.	10
Toilets.	10
Protecting And Sharing Our Trails.	10
Road Crossings.	11
Rules and Policies.	11
Crew and Spectators.	12

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Introduction.

Hello Thunderbunny Trail Race Participants!

It's hard to believe, but here we are approaching the 2022 Thunderbunny Trail Races, which means it's been a full 2 years since the race has happened, due to the covid-19 global pandemic canceling the 2020 and 2021 versions. If I learned one thing in those two years, it's that I totally missed this race, and welcoming runners into Athens, Ohio during one of the most beautiful times of the year.

Thunderbunny has grown to be one of the largest trail races in Ohio and we are super grateful for your support in making this an amazing event. This year we'll have nearly 350 runners between the 3 distances. SEOTR and this race is all about showcasing Athens and bringing people in from all over the region to explore the Athens trails - we believe these are some of the nicest singletrack trails in the region! We try to make everything about Thunderbunny local, from the handcrafted awards down to the food served after the race. The Thunderbunny Trail Race is the largest event in Strouds Run State Park, so welcome to Athens and Strouds Run, see you on the trails!

Michael Owen
SEOTR Race Director

Thunderbunny Weekend Schedule.

Friday May 6

3:00 - 7:00PM - Packet Pickup	Strouds Run Campground
5:00PM - 11K Race Start	Strouds Run Campground
8:30PM - Anticipated Final 11K Finisher	Strouds Run Campground

Saturday May 7

6:00 - 7:30AM - Packet Pickup	Strouds Run Campground
8:00AM - 50K and 25K Races Start	Strouds Run Campground
5:00PM - 50K Course Cutoff	Strouds Run Campground

*awards will be presented during the events once all the award winners have finished.



CHANGES IN 2022!

As we've shared in a previous email and on our website, the Thunderbunny Trail Races will have a new Start/Finish Area in 2022, with everything now in the Strouds Run Campground! This relocation will not impact where the parking is, as it is just two-tenth of a mile from the previous Start/Finish Area, but it will slightly impact each of the three courses.

[USE THIS LINK TO VIEW THE FULL ANNOUNCEMENT AND DETAILS ABOUT THE CHANGE.](#)

Packet Pickup.

We encourage everyone to pick up their "race packet" early! It will make your morning, and ours, easier when it's your day to race!

With the 11K now being on Friday, all packet pickup times will be located at the new Start/Finish Area in the Strouds Run State Park Campground

Friday

3:00PM - 7:00 PM @ Strouds Run State Park Campground

*If you are in the 50K/25K - please note that the 11K will be taking place at 5:00PM on Friday - you're still encouraged to come pick up your packet on Friday, while hanging out to spectate and cheer on the runners in the 11K! Be cautious of 11K runners, and please park in the Beach Parking Lot.

Saturday

6:00AM - 7:30AM @ Strouds Run State Park Campground

Pre-Race Briefings.

On race day we will have a short pre-race briefing/meeting 15 minutes before the start - be around the start line for this!

Event Parking.

There is ample parking at the Strouds Run State Park Beach Parking Lot, between a 1/4 mile and 6/10 of a mile walk to the starting area at the campground. When walking to the start/finish area, please watch for traffic on Strouds Run Rd. We will have this patrolled.

With that said, SEOTR still recommends a couple of ways to make the parking lot less crowded and easier to navigate on race morning.



- Carpool with friends or family who also plan to be at Thunderbunny.
- If you are camping in the Strouds Run campground, walk to the start/finish area (1/4 mile)

Below is a picture of the parking lot area at the Strouds Run Beach to help you get familiar with the area (the orange dotted line denotes the walking route to the starting area).



Camping.

Runners who registered for the group camp option can check in at packet pick-up. Like the website states, this is a “primitive” campsite with pit toilets and no shower house or electricity. You will be sharing a field tucked in the woods with other group campers from the race! There is water at the camp - if the water spigot inside the group camp does not work, there are several just a short walk over by the main campground. A Porta John will be at the campsite along with the pit toilets on site within the main campground area.

Campers can arrive starting at 12:00PM on Friday.

[PLEASE USE THIS LINK TO SEE EXACTLY WHERE THE GROUP CAMP IS](#)



Parking for campers in the group camp will not fit everyone. If conditions are dry campers will need to park in the grass field across the road from the group camp. If the field is wet we have permission to park in the main campground, at empty sites, and along the side of the road (parallel parking). **Just make sure you stay off of the main road**, which runs between the main campground and the group campground.

Weather Note.

With Thunderbunny being in early May, we can have many different types of weather, ranging from cold and rain, to very hot and sunny. Due to the weather not being hot in the months before the race, it means our bodies have not acclimated to the heat.

- Hydrate extra in the days leading up to your race.
- Be knowledgeable on the aid station distances and your projected time gaps between those stations.
- Consider bringing a handheld water bottle or hydration vest to race in.
- If you start experiencing a higher heart rate, nausea, dizziness, muscle cramps, and sweating more than normal, slow your pace down or walk until you recover.
- At aid stations take advantage of water and electrolyte drink.

Search for “Athens, Ohio” on your weather app to follow the weather prior to the race.

Course Breakdown.

Please view the comprehensive course maps and details on [THE COURSE PAGE ON THE WEBSITE](#).

Important course items on the website:

- Interactive course maps with elevation profile
- Aid Station charts
- Downloadable GPX Files (great for watches that support route imports!)
- Links to Strava Routes of each course (great for saving onto phone and following!)

Course Markings.

We will ensure a properly marked course that will give you the best chance to stay on course!

There will be several ways we mark the course:

- **Pink “pin flags”** (in ground) will be placed regularly along the route. These flags will be **on the right side of the trail** at all times (with the exception of any out and back sections).
- Arrows posted on signs will be placed at key intersections.
- **Red “Wrong Way”** signs will be placed to indicate where not to go.



- At very busy and key intersections, there may be a person directing traffic.
- Where a course splits (eg. 25K and 50K split), there will be signs that say the race distance with an arrow pointing in the proper direction.

The moral of the story is to pay attention at all times to the course markings. Sometimes runners zone out, or are going too fast, and miss a turn.... whenever there is a key intersection or confluence of trails, it is best to take a moment to slow down making sure you know which way to turn.

We'll also make every effort to check course markings before races start, and during the race, to make sure course markings have stayed intact and not tampered with or removed.

Aid Stations.

Study the course map, aid station charts, and learn where the "FULL" and "WATER ONLY" stations are. See the difference below and what each station will have:

Thanks to Tailwind Nutrition for supplying Thunderbunny with their Endurance Drink Mix. Each serving of Trailwind has ~200 calories and supplies you with needed amino acids and electrolytes. The Tailwind will be non-caffeinated.

FULL Aid Stations: Full aid stations will have water, hydration mix, ice, soda, an array of salty foods, an array of sweet foods, fruits (eg. watermelon, etc.), and some real foods (eg potatoes/salt, etc.).

At full aid stations we will also have items like, first aid, vaseline, hand sanitizer, and more.

WATER/HYDRATION ONLY Aid Stations: Aid stations listed as water only will have water and Tailwind.

Cups: While we are not a fully "cupless race" we encourage all runners to carry a bottle or a collapsible cup with them to limit our waste of single-use paper cups, especially those runners in the 50K!

Drop Bags.

There are two drop bag locations outlined on the aid station charts on the website. You can drop off your drop bags the morning of the race at the start line.

Dow Lake Aid Station, Mile 13.03 (50K and 25K runners)

Sells Park Aid Station, Mile 22.92 (50K runners)

**Please note that we will no longer have drop bags at Hope Drive AS (mile 18.53), but have made the second drop bag location at the Sells Park AS (mile 22.93).*



Have bags labeled with duct tape and sharpie, or in some form with Last Name, Bib #, AS Location. Drop bags will be out in the open so make sure they are able to withstand water or put belongings in plastic bags. No abnormally large bags - keep drop bags the size of a small backpack, cinch bag, or gallon ziploc bag).

If you want to have a drop bag for both locations, you will need two different drop bags. Drop Bags will be delivered back to the finish line once the Aid Station closes, breaks down, and the crew returns back to the finish line.

Cutoff Times.

This is one of the hardest things as a Race Director and aid station worker; however, we must enforce our cutoffs. Please be respectful if an aid station worker pulls you from the race. You will be given the option of continuing but you must realize that it is on your own after that point. We prefer that you take a ride back to the finish line if you don't make a cut off.

Please see the aid station charts on the 25K and 50K "Course Description" pages for cutoff times. Please be familiar with these times or write them down to run with so you know what to expect.

Switching Distances.

You may still switch your distances of the race by either changing it through your UltraSignup account "registration history" or notifying me if you registered as a guest. You can do this through Wednesday, please let us know ahead of time! We prefer you not transfer distances at packet pick-up or mid race. If you switch distances mid race you will be recorded as a DNF.

Dropping Out During the Race.

THIS IS CRITICAL! If you happen to drop out of the race during the race, you **MUST LET SOMEONE KNOW**, either an aid station worker or report back to the finish line to tell our timing crew. If we do not know you dropped out then we may presume you are still on the course, and we will get worried you are lost out there. Please let us know if you have to drop out.



Awards and Swag.

Finishers Award

50K and 25K runners will receive a locally crafted wooden “finishers medal” upon crossing the finish line! This will go along nicely for past finishers who have received pint glasses. Do not run off too fast once crossing the line so our volunteer can give your well-deserved finishers award.

Category Awards

If you happen to be one of our overall or age group award winners we will be announcing the awards during the race. Your award will be a custom made “Thunderbunny” wood cutout from local company Red Tail Design!

To view a list of award categories, you can view them on the [RACE DETAILS PAGE](#).

Collegiate Trail Running Championship.



The Friday 11K represents the 2022 Collegiate Running Association Trail Running Championship!

Any person that has been enrolled in a collegiate course since 1/1/2022 is eligible to be included in the championship results! All information on how to enter, and be included in the championship is listed on the website [HERE](#).

Collegiate runners and all regular participants will start the 11K together and run the same course together, as well as be listed in the overall results together. The collegiate results will be pulled out separately to just include those eligible.

- The top 3 collegiate runners will receive separate overall awards, as well as prize money.
- The top 3 non-collegiate runners will also receive overall awards.



Post-Race Food.

This year we will be serving Avalanche Pizza! Avalanche has been voted the best pizza in Athens for 20 straight years and is recognized all over the region! 50K and 25K runners get food for free as part of their registration. Spectators/Family can purchase a Meal Ticket on race day for \$10. If you are a runner and would like to purchase an extra ticket for your crew/family, you can click the “Store” tab on the Thunderbunny UltraSignup registration page to do so. Cash and cards are accepted on race day.

Bib #'s.

Please have your bib number visible during the race for aid station workers to see so we can track who has come through aid stations and at the finish line. Do not pin your bib on the back of your shirt or on your pack - please place the bib on the front of your body.

Turtlehead Cave Bib Punch.

We have added a short add-on for 50K runners between miles 22 and 23 that takes you into Turtlehead Cave off the Rockhouse Trail. This literally only adds on 2/10 of a mile but it brings you into an awesome cliff overhang that everyone needs to see! There will be a Heart-Shaped Hole Punch hanging on a string for you to punch your bib with to prove you were there! This area will be clearly marked.

Toilets.

There are many pit toilets located throughout the parking area and the campground at Strouds Run State Park. There will also be a row of portable toilets near the Start/Finish Area, with a handwashing station.

There will also be a portable toilet at the Dow Lake Dam aid station (mile 13.04) and the Sells Park aid station (mile 22.92) If you need to relieve yourself along the course, please step off the trail, and use the woods. If you poop, please use Leave No Trace rules and bury it as best you can (use a stick or your foot), away from water sources and far off the trail.

Protecting And Sharing Our Trails.

One of the reasons we put on trail races is because of our love for trails and the environment. It is important for us and our participants to be good stewards of the trails, so we can protect them as much as possible so that all users can enjoy them throughout the year.

Thunderbunny provides countless hours of hard work to maintain the trails at Strouds Run!



- The trails are open to the public during the weekend. Please be courteous to all other users; hikers, mountain bikers, etc. etc.
- Please do not pass runners while running through wildflowers or very tight singletrack on the trails!

Road Crossings.

Please be careful and look for cars as you cross paved roads. You will cross the main road THREE (3) times if you are in the 50K and twice for the other races. Traffic will not be stopped. We will have attendants and law enforcement at the one main crossing, but cars have the right-of-way. Pause and look both ways when crossing any paved roads. When driving in and out of the park be careful for runners as they are on the course

Rules and Policies.

1. **DO NOT LITTER.** This isn't a road race. When you eat a gel, or have a cup of water at an aid station, plan to use the trash can at aid stations, or stash your trash in your pocket or pack. If you see trash along the trail please stop and pick it up. We want to leave the trail as good as we found it!
2. **Be Kind** to other participants and volunteers. This goes without saying, but as a trail running community, we take pride in treating our fellow runners like close friends! Be courteous and helpful to everyone!
3. Wear your bib # visible on the front of your body at all times (front of shorts or shirt)
4. You **MUST** enter every aid station. We record bibs at every station to track runners. There is a short out and back at the Dow Lake Dam AS. You must go down the hill into the station and back up.
5. Stay on the course and trails at all times, and do not cut corners or switchbacks.
6. When passing other runners on the trail, announce which side you are passing and wait for a safe moment to pass.
7. If you wish to transfer to a shorter distance prior to the race, please let us know before starting. If you are in a longer distance and decide mid-run to run the shorter distance course, please let us know when you finish.
8. DNF's (Did not finish): We wish everyone a safe and good finish, but the reality is that sometimes people are unable to finish. If you need to drop out of the race, please do so at an aid station and let an aid station worker know. Do not leave the course without informing someone you are dropping out, or else we will be looking for you!
9. Please do not have any friend or family without a bib run with you. While this is a public park and open to the public it is forbidden to have a "pacer." We have actually had this problem in the past year and if we find someone running with you without a bib you will be DQ'd.
10. No being mean to volunteers, general public, or other runners. This rule solves many problems!



- 11. Do not bring your dogs to run with during the race. This is not within our permit or insurance policy.
- 12. You may wear headphones but please either keep one earbud out or keep the volume low enough to hear others. Do not listen to music audible on speakers to where others can hear. Many runners want to enjoy the quietness of the forest.

Crew and Spectators.

If you have family or friends that want to support you and cheer for you along the course please direct them to [THIS CREW AND SPECTATOR GUIDE](#). Please make sure that they follow this guide and do not go to any of the locations outside of these aid stations.

Thunderbunny is very spectator friendly and friends or family can follow you to a lot of the aid stations. They will also be easily able to drive through town during the race for food and other activities.