

The Marsh Island Trail Runners *present*

# TUCARD 2021

Maine's most Terrifically (& Unnecessarily) Complicated Adventure Race and Duathlon

*A Fundraiser for Public Lands & Maine's Private Land Ethic  
and a cross-country race with too many rules and neither support nor swag  
that thrives on being a pain in your @\$*

**9:00 am, Saturday, September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021**



**The Premise:** This race has no course. It has a starting point, an ending point, and some as-yet-unrevealed number of way stations in between. Your objective is to get from the start to all of the way stations—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 way-station locations will be released *just before race 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, remember that new rules are coming .....

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

**The Prize:** 50% of the race profits are used for prizes<sup>1</sup>. The rest of the profits go directly to the Orono Land Trust. Really nice winners in the past have donated all or some of their prize money to the OLT ... just saying.

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<sup>1</sup> Cash prizes are capped at \$2,500, even if a million people register for the race. Mostly, ok entirely, so we don't have to get a permit with the State Gambling Control Unit. Also, high school and college athletes may be ineligible for prize money. Talk to your coaches.

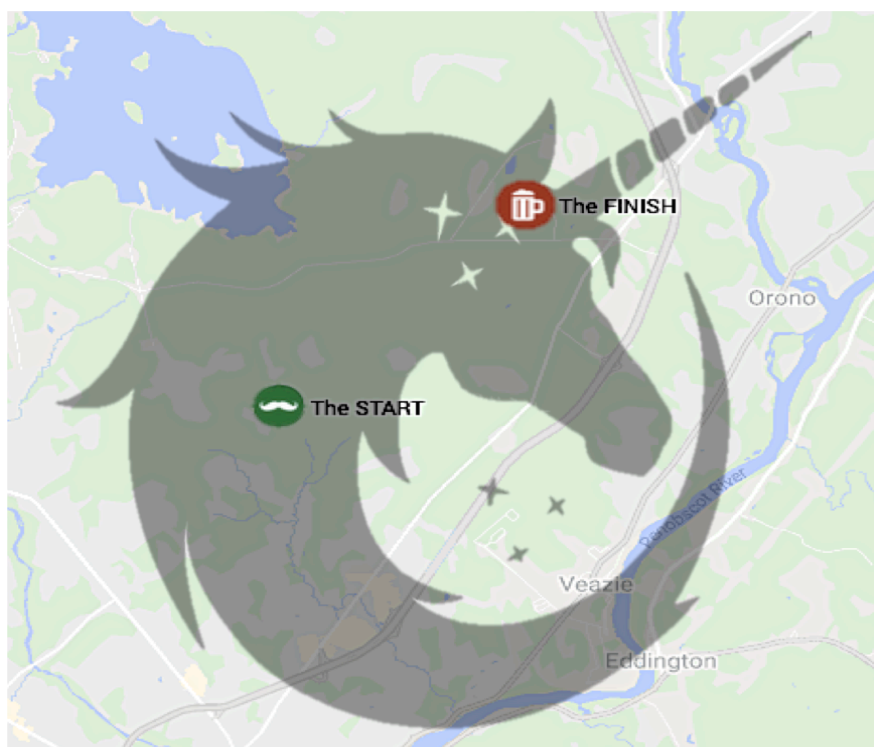


# 2021 COURSE

## *"The Culling of the Sacs"*

STARTING POINT: 44.866446°N, 68.762365°W<sup>2</sup>

FINISH POINT: 44.897940°N, 68.717786°W



The legendary *\*Sparkle Pony\** of TUCARD casts a long shadow. But be assured, the race way points are somewhere within it. Knowing your way around the SHADOW OF THE PONY is a good first step to being race ready. Once you register, you'll get a zoomable, detailed, pdf for your training and race planning!

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

# TUCARD 2021 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 rule* that will be revealed the morning of the race. And here are some rules that have popped up randomly since registration opened, but are still legally binding<sup>3</sup>:

- A. **The Shadow of the Pony (Mar 2022).** The legendary \*Sparkle Pony\* of TUCARD casts a long shadow. But be assured, the race way points are somewhere within it. Knowing your way around the shadow is a good first step to being race ready.
- B. **The Golden Ticket (Aug 2022).** There is way station in the Shadow of the Pony whose location will never be revealed by us. And you do not need to find it to finish the race. Maybe no one will find this way station! But if you happen upon it, it's your ticket to the finish line. You do not need to gather any other way station markers. Go directly to the finish, do not pass go. How will you find it? Luck? Guile? Enhanced interrogation techniques? We're not sure, but maybe this will help<sup>4</sup>:

<i>On a trail, clearly seen,</i>	<i>Lies your path, in two sheds,</i>
<i>Far from tar, in between</i>	<i>One on earth, and it's said</i>
<i>A wet moose and a not</i>	<i>You can see where it flows</i>
<i>That dry caribou</i>	<i>Right in front of you</i>

**And here's a few rules that have been around awhile and still apply:**

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 way station you will find a marker with your bib number on it. Hand them all in at the finish to prove you made it to all of the way stations.
4. **There is a "pavement penalty"** that you should definitely keep in mind as you plan your route. 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. Sorry, that means no planter hopping across parking lots to avoid the penalty.
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) 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.

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<sup>3</sup> Except for the fact that they are in no way legally binding

<sup>4</sup> It probably won't.





**6. There are time adjustments based on your means of locomotion.**

Here's a whole list of those:

- a. On foot = time x 1.0 (i.e., regular time)
- b. On bike = time x 1.5  
(e.g., one minute of biking adds 1.5 minutes to your time)
- c. In a boat = time x 0.50
- d. Swimming = time x 0.25
- e. In a hot air balloon = time x 0.10  
(mostly I just want to see someone try this)
- f. On skis/roller skis = time x 1.5
- g. On roller skates / blades / skateboard = time x 1.25
- h. 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. Time adjustments are compounded.**

So if you bike on a paved road for a minute, you get three minutes added to your running time (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 (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. Coulda-woulda-shoulda bonus.** If you can run the 2020 course fast and smart enough, following all of the rules *for 2020*, to log a score in the top third of 2020 finishers for your category (male solo < 1h 34m 56s; female solo < 2h 26m 13s; or team < 4h 1m 50s), we'll take five minutes off your 2021 race time. If you participated in 2020, you *also* have to improve on your 2020 score by at list one minute to get this bonus. To qualify, digital tracks proving your performance must be submitted to MITR via Strava or email ([marshislandtrailrunners@gmail.com](mailto:marshislandtrailrunners@gmail.com)) by August 25, 2021. No need to grab way station markers. Just run past the locations (2020 coordinates and rules are posted at: <https://www.marshislandtrailrunners.org/tucard2020>).

- 9. Teams are encouraged.** Sometimes there are special team rules that get released later. Sometimes there aren't. Teams always seem to have more fun though. Fun is encouraged. The one team rule you should know is that all members of the team have to stay together the whole time. No dividing up the way stations and conquering. That being said, it's easier to paddle your canoe down Main Street with a friend.

- 10. 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:
- a. Switch your conveyance (e.g., going from biking to running or sailing to paragliding)
  - b. Move onto or off of pavement.

For each segment, a line on the worksheet will record the time taken (real 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 just start a new activity every time you either switch modes of locomotion or switch to or from pavement. Then you can just fill out the worksheet once you finish.

**11. 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 of distance and time 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 your segments! **NOTE:** this means that if you use a running app to track your route segments, and you forget to hit start once, 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. Note that any time gap between the elapsed time in your combined digital tracks and your elapsed official race time (between the start and finish times recorded by race officials) will be assigned the penalty value of your most heavily penalized segment.

**12. Race like a confused squirrel.** The route is approximately 3 miles as the crow flies from start to finish, but who wants to race like a crow? That's boring.<sup>5</sup> It will vary considerably year to year, but the *winning* routes are generally two to three times the length of the straight-line distance. And of course there is always some truly adventurous soul competing for the "lost dog" award. Last year the Lost Dog traveled almost five times the distance of the crow route. Can you beat that? Bring snacks, if you're going for it.

**13. Winner-winner-chicken-dinner.** The winners (fastest official time in each race class to complete the course after all penalties and adjustments) split 50% of the registration fees after we cover our costs. The rest goes to the Orono Land Trust to support Public Lands and to help them provide us all with an adventure course all year.



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<sup>5</sup> 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.

14. **Afterglow.** There is a party at the end if such things are allowed by the Great State of Maine. There will be beverages. And stories and laughter. And no race results, because it's going to take us a million years to figure out who won.



## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Q: What if we're all on quarantine in September?**

**A:** We ran the race last year with staggered starts and masks. We can do it again! Short of a zombie apocalypse, we'll figure it out. There is no need for anyone to be in the same place at the same time for this thing to go on. So no excuses!! Get training! In fact, this is kind of the perfect training regime for a zombie apocalypse. So even if that's what happens in September, get training!

### **Q: This sounds dangerous. How will you ensure my safety?**

**A:** By writing up a really intense waiver form and telling you this race is dangerous and you probably shouldn't run it. Like, there's a decent chance you'll tear something or maybe get lost in the woods and eaten by bears. Running this race is an awful idea. In fact, if you asked this question, please don't come. One of the way stations is guarded by a dragon.

### **Q: Will there be cool swag?**

**A:** No. See our motto. It's a fundraiser.

### **Q: Will there be aid stations?**

**A:** Where would we put the aid stations? I mean, we could put them at the way stations, I guess, but that would mean we have to carry more things back into the middle of the woods. Nah. You're on your own. But there will be beer at the end. That's all the aid you need. Although, maybe you should bring a first aid kit. That dragon in the middle of the course might make you wish you had some burn cream or something.

### **Q: What's the super-secret surprise rule?**

**A:** It's a pony.

### **Q: That's not a rule, that's an animal.**

**A:** You're an animal.

### **Q: What about trespassing?**

**A:** What about it? Please obey all laws and municipal ordinances. If you are going to build a shed, get a permit. There are no penalties for your route unless you are on pavement.

If you want to learn more about why Maine's Land Ethic is *incredible* and needs to be stewarded forever, please check out this blog post by Andrew Hill Legal LLC:

<http://www.andrewchill.com/blog/2018/8/6/get-off-of-my-lawn-trespassingin-maine>

**Short of it:** if you decide to plot a route over someone's (unposted) land, you aren't breaking any laws, but if you hurt yourself, you can't hold them liable. Unless they set booby traps. So. Beware of booby traps. Always sound advice. Also be nice to people and their stuff.

### **Q: Since this is a benefit for the Orono Land Trust, is that a clue as to where the way stations will be?**

**A:** That's ridiculous.

### **Q: How long will the race take? I have a prior commitment at 4 pm.**

**A:** It could take a while, depending. How long exactly is kind of up to you! You should probably bring water and snacks and stuff.

### **Q: Will there be a shuttle to get us back to the start to get our stuff?**

**A:** No. This race is about logistics. You can figure it out. We believe in you.

**Q: Can we have support sherpas?**

**A:** Sure. You can have people carry your stuff around. You just have to carry all of YOU around, but if you want someone to do a gear drop with a hang-glider at the top of Chick Hill, that's cool. I mean, it'd be weird, because there isn't a way station anywhere near there, but you do you.

**Q: What is the official course record?**

**A:** Depeche Mode's "Violator" (1990) in vinyl LP.

**Q: What's to stop people from cheating? Like, what if they say they were running when they were actually using a fat bike with pedal-powered wings?**

**A:** Yeah, it's possible you could cheat. But we'd be *really* disappointed in you. If we know your mother, we'll tell her what you did, and she'll be disappointed in you too. If someone tells us you cheated, you'll be disqualified, and we'll confiscate your flying fat bike, because that sounds totally awesome and we want it.

**Q: Is there a rain date?**

**A:** Ha ha ha ha ha! You're funny. Oh, but I really do hope it rains. That would be EPIC!!

**Q: Are you just doing this insanity because you wanted to organize a trail race, but you are too lazy to put up trail markers and worry about people getting lost?**

**A:** Maybe. Shut up.

**Q: How do you pronounce "TUCARD"?**

**A:** Like this: "tucard".

**Q: Will you announce the general areas where waypoints could be placed like you did last year?**

**A:** Yes.

**Q: When?**

**A:** Later. (*editor's note:* this answer should now be interpreted as "earlier" ... yes, that's "TUCARD logic")

**Q: Will it be peanut-shaped again?**

**A:** No. There were too many allergies last year.

**Q: If I have a flying fat bike, will I win?**

**A:** At life.

**Q: You all are clearly insane. Is there a way I can avoid you in case whatever you have is communicable?**

**A:** Yes. Don't follow "Marsh Island Trail Runners" on Strava (<https://www.strava.com/clubs/marshisland>) and don't join us for any of our weekly MITR "Tuesday Trail Day" evening runs during the snow-free seasons (<https://www.marshislandtrailrunners.org/>). Also, we generally do our shopping on Mondays at the Old Town Hannaford.



## **Infrequently Asked Questions**

**Q: What's my name again?**

**Q: If you plant bird seed, does it grow into a bird? And if it does, what do you feed it?**

**Q: Why does the pony sparkle?**

**Q: Why Istanbul and not Constantinople?**

**Q: Why is a hot air balloon counted as human-powered?**

**Q: How much ground would a groundhog hog if a groundhog could hog ground?**

**Q: What are the race organizers smoking and where can I find some?**

**Q: What color is a mirror?**

## APPENDIX A

# TU CARD 2020

## The Terrifically (and Unnecessarily) Complicated Scoring Sheet EXAMPLE

Name: Brumbaugh Fergusson the Faint-hearted

Starting Time: 08:15.00

Finish Time (unofficial): 10:22.31

Digital platform: Strava

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

## RACE SEGMENTS

Starting time (hh:mm:ss)	Pavement? (Y/N)	Conveyance Type?	Digital Track? (Y/N)
08:15.00	N	Running	Y
08:55.01	Y	Biking	Y
09:13.21	N	Swimming	Y
09:27.12	N	Running	Y
10:02.07	Y	Running	Y
10:10.56	N	Running	Y
10:15.56	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 Union St. boat launch, where he swam across the Penobscot to another trail. He ran a series of different dirt trails for 34 min 55 sec, ran down a paved road for 8 min 49 secs to another trail head, and then ran another five minutes on that last trail before meeting up with his logistics partner to conduct a 3-legged race over the finish line.			

You can either 1) hand in this scoresheet at the finish line or 2) email it to [MarshIslandTrailRunners@gmail.com](mailto:MarshIslandTrailRunners@gmail.com) before 11:59 pm on Saturday, September 25th, 2021. Official digital tracks must also be received by that deadline to qualify for a race prize. If you use Strava and follow the instructions provided, you just have to upload your data to Strava by then.

## 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? 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](#)
3. [RSVP to the TUCARD](#) by clicking on "I'm in" - [https://www.strava.com/clubs/232370/group\\_events/858506](https://www.strava.com/clubs/232370/group_events/858506)  
If you have your [privacy permissions](#) (<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>), 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. 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. I get an unnatural amount of enjoyment watching people get lost.

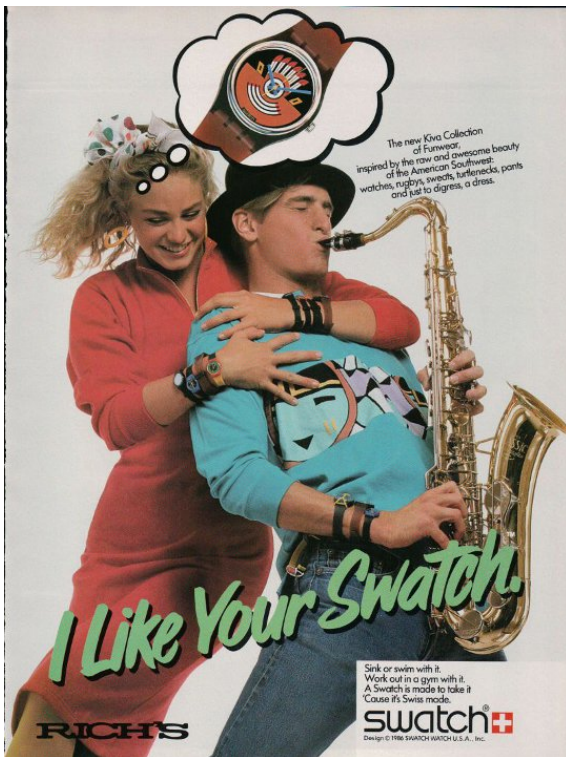
### What to do on race day:

1. 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).
2. Start an activity when you start your race. You can do this on your phone in your Strava app, or you can do it on your gps watch and upload the data to Strava later.
3. Stop the activity and start a new one every time you a) switch conveyances—from running to biking or what have you, or b) switch onto or off of pavement—whenever it's more than just running across a paved road or path.
4. Don't forget to start or stop your Strava for each of those instances, or you will mess everything up and not get an official race time.
5. After you are finished with the race, upload your data (if you used a watch), go back to your different activities, and edit your sport to match your conveyance. Strava has a lot of options. You can set it to running, biking, swimming, canoe, handcycle, inline skate, kayak, kitesurf ... a bunch. If any of you were planning on using a velomobile, please let us know so we can come film it. Those things look cool! Also, they are human powered, so they are legal in the race.

6. Please name each segment with the following naming convention to help us find all of them and pull them in order: “TUCARD Leg #X – CONVEYANCE on PAVEMENT/TRAILS”. So for example: “TUCARD Leg #1 – Running on trails” or “TUCARD Leg #8 – Boating on pavement”.
7. Then please fill out the score sheet anyway.  
Because: Department of Redundancy Department.

## What about Strava “quirks”?

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 often related to the “auto-pause” option, which you should not have on for this race (please)<sup>6</sup>. 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).



**Figure 1.** Wearing multiple watches gives you style points. Running either in a dress made of sweatshirt fabric or with a saxophone does as well.

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. Did we even ask about distance? NO! We care about *time* and *conveyance* 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.<sup>7</sup> 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 are scorekeeping rules are over Strava’s algorithm).

We recommend using Strava because we think it will be easier<sup>8</sup>, 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 conveyances at the times you said you did on the scoresheet. If your favorite digital method lets you do 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 any money.

<sup>6</sup> In our personal 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, for us or for you, and will invalidate your official timing.

<sup>7</sup> You will not receive style points for having a flip phone.

<sup>8</sup> And because we are angling for corporate sponsorship for next year and the scorekeeper has tied his self-esteem to his Strava follower number.