



Wow.

I'll get to some stats about distances and performance in a bit, but I want to start with the thing that stuck out to me at this year's Loopet: Community.

In the endurance trail running world, there is a spirit that all competitors are working together to do something that most people cannot even fathom. Even when running solo, I have found ultras to be the largest team sport I have ever participated in. If we see another runner struggling, we stop to make sure they are ok. If we see garbage on the trail, we take the time to pick it up. And, we cheer on the last finisher with the same—if not more—gusto than the first.

This spirit ran strong yesterday. Our 12 hour women's champion, Courtney West, stopped in the middle of her run to take several minutes to help a lost girl on the trail find her mother. I saw a relay team racer going around the finish area with his children several times during the day picking up any garbage that was lying around. I overheard countless interactions of racers pumping up other racers to get back out there for another loop. People didn't just cheer for "their" people, they cheered for absolutely everyone who was out on the trail.

I am immensely proud to have played a small part in so many personal accomplishments and personal bests that happened out there. I am even prouder to see a community that cares so deeply about each other and about the land and trails that we are lucky enough to be able to use.

We do still have room for improvement. As I looked around, I couldn't help but notice that a majority of the folks who were on the trail looked quite a bit like me (a white cisgender male). I am learning and growing in my ability to be a race director who creates a space that is truly welcoming to all comers. I hope that you will join me in a commitment to being a community that everyone—no matter your race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, immigration status, language, disability status, or how fast or slow you run or hike—can belong to. And, I hope you will reach out to me if you have thoughts or ideas of what the Loopet can do to put our commitment to inclusion into action more effectively.

On to some numbers. Our runners put in a whopping 1061 laps totalling 4105 miles—a distance more than half the diameter of the earth! We had 164 entrants completing at least one lap. 65 of those (including some individuals who were part of a relay team) completed at least 27 miles to earn the "ultramarathoner" sticker. Our longest solo effort was Nick Lowe with a course record of 67 miles. Our longest female effort was Courtney West with 57 miles. In the 6 hour category,

Julie Garretson was our female champion with 23 miles and Mark Kalar was our male champion with 31 miles. Medium Effort Mustangs took the relay team title with 81 miles.

Enormous thanks to all the volunteers without whom this event would not happen. Our aid station team who kept the awesome spread of food going all day (including Michelle Hall—our aid station captain—who had just completed her first 100 mile race the week before but still spent over 14 hours on her feet helping runners out). Our medical team who were kept busy patching up scraped knees and elbows. Our timers who hand-recorded all 1061 times someone crossed the finish line. All the folks who helped set up and take down the course and the turnaround area.

A huge thanks to the [Loppet Foundation](#) and the Loppet Staff for hosting and supporting this event. The Loopet would not be what it is without the incredible Loppet staff and an amazing venue like the Trailhead and the gorgeous trails that are maintained throughout the year by the foundation. The Loppet Foundation has the [mission](#) of connecting people to the outdoors through experiences that grow community. Please consider [supporting](#) the Loppet through a donation or membership as well as continuing to participate in Loppet events and programs. Come join the Loppet on November 19th for the 5K [Turkey Traverse](#).

Thank you to all participants, volunteers, Loppet staff, friends, and family for making the 2022 Loopet such a magical day!

David Bitner
Loopet Race Director
[Missing Link Running](#) Coach