



THE RUNNER / RD DOUBLE

BY CHASE HAMMOND

FLATROCK INDEPENDENCE, KS // SEPTEMBER 24

 3,5' // 101 MILES, 101K, 50K

Elevation gain: Approx.
3,000 feet – 50K
6,000 – 101k
9,000 – 101 miles

The course consists of a 50k loop which is run twice for the 101k, and run three times plus an additional out-and-back along the same course to reach the 101-mile distance. It is technical, mostly singletrack along the Elk River Hiking Trail. It is an accurately measured forest trail winding through unique limestone bluffs, rock formations and picturesque vistas.

HELL CREEK 100 SYLVAN GROVE, KS // SEPTEMBER 30

 3,3' // 140 MILES, 100 MILES, 100K

Elevation gain:
140 Miler – 14,168 feet
100 Miler – 10,120
100K – 6,072

The races consist of 20-mile loops with no repetition. They take place on the very hilly, but not overly rugged, single-track, Switchgrass Mountain Bike Trail. Much of the trail runs directly beside beautiful Wilson Lake and is totally exposed, with no heavily wooded areas.

Gilbert Hernandez, who DNF'd in 2021, returned to the Hell Creek 100K in 2022 and took second place.

 ELIZABETH MARTINKO /
MILE 90 PHOTOGRAPHY



TWO of the Kansas fall 100-mile races, FlatRock and Hell Creek, have a few things in common. They're both beautiful but tough, and often underestimated by first-timers traveling from outside Kansas. This year they also had *me* in common, as I decided to run the FlatRock 101-mile race the weekend before I directed Hell Creek 100. You might call it the Runner/RD Double.

The FlatRock 50K is the oldest ultra in Kansas, but 2022 was the first year for the 101-mile distance at the event. I thought it would be sweet to be one of the first 101-mile finishers in a race with so much history. FlatRock is super rocky, wooded and technical, with plenty of climbs. It was a fantastic race on a beautiful and challenging course, and was truly an honor to be a small part of this new distance in Kansas's oldest ultra. Race director Jeremy Harrison and his crew did a great job.

After finishing at FlatRock, there was no time to celebrate (or recover, for that matter). My wife and co-RD, Casey, and I woke up early the day after FlatRock to head to Wilson Lake to prepare for our own race: the Hell Creek 100.

Hell Creek has a combination of sand and rock, but it is far less technical than FlatRock and almost entirely "runnable." That said, Hell Creek is the 100-mile race with the most elevation change in Kansas, with frequent climbs and a trail that is constantly twisting and turning, not to mention totally exposed. The lack of tree cover at Hell Creek provides gorgeous views of Wilson Lake, but exposes participants to unpredictable Kansas weather. This year, heat was the story for both races.

Like FlatRock, Hell Creek incorporated a new distance for 2022: the Pure Hell 140, the longest race in Kansas, which started at 5 p.m. on Friday. After experiencing the quick turnaround from running FlatRock to directing Hell Creek, Casey and I were



LEFT: Krystal Brown (#135), competing in the 50k, passes Nicole Fleming, competing in the 101-mile, on the FlatRock out-and-back course.

📷 JOHN KNEPPER /
MILE 90 PHOTOGRAPHY

BELOW: Jeremy Tiner, second in the FlatRock 50K, climbs up the Devil's Crack.

📷 RICK MAYO /
MILE 90 PHOTOGRAPHY

quick to initiate a new rule: no racing the week before we race direct, as it led to 16-hour days all week in preparation. From now on, we will give ourselves more time.

It's a strange dynamic doing a 100-mile race one weekend and hosting one the next. It provides two unique perspectives on the sport, and both are equally rewarding for me. The sense of accomplishment crossing the line is rivaled only by witnessing that same feeling in others. Interestingly, I rarely get emotional in or after the races I run, but have caught myself holding back tears multiple times during the races we host. Those moments always come toward the end of the race when I see the last runners who have been gritting it out the longest and have almost nothing left to give. I love seeing the elite performances—those are impressive—but the ones that hit me hard are the people who have to scratch and claw just to cross the line. Part of it is because I know the feeling from experience, but mostly it's because I'm happy for them.

I love the sport. I love running in races, I love RDing, I love training—but more than anything, I love the people. The ultrarunning community is unlike anything else. ▲





Lisamarie Fosdal-Griffin was one of only two finishers at this year's Pure Hell 140, part of the Hell Creek race series.

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Hell Creek 100

Sylvan Grove, KS // September 30

🏃 3,3' // 140 MILES,
100 MILES, 100K

140 MILES

1	Lisamarie Fosdal-Griffin, 53, NM	48:11:16
2	Rene Fosdal-Griffin, 53, NM	48:11:21

100 MILES

1	Jonathan Prosser, 32, KS	25:47:52
2	Oscar Cruz, 31	28:25:10
3	Adam Knutson, 33, OK	28:45:57
4	Blaine Moore, 52, KS	29:47:34
5	Shane Plemons, 47, KS	31:31:59

100K

1	Jess Riffner, 41, NE	11:42:15
2	Gilbert Hernandez, 35, KS	16:52:52
3	Nathan Hanson, 36, NE	17:15:07
4	Kim Helzer, 40, NE	18:39:57

FlatRock

Independence, KS // September 24

🏃 3,5' // 101 MILES,
101K, 50K

101 MILES

1	Chase Hammond, 38, KS	31:49:18
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101K

1	Derek Hightower, 21, KS	15:33:44
2	Travis Jewell, 40, NE	16:11:43
3	Levi Crandall, 28, OK	17:03:02
4	Jesse Nininger, 38, KS	19:18:33
5	Dustin Motley, 39, OK	20:45:00
6	Clarice Malotte, 28, CO	22:51:02

50K

1	Brant Littrell, 41, MO	5:00:36
2	Jeremy Tiner, 42, AR	6:15:33
3	Jacob Van Bergeijk, 53, KS	6:16:05
4	Eric Hunn, 33, KS	6:22:54
5	Graham Money, 45, KS	6:23:39
6	Ambr Montgomery, 33, MO	6:26:12
7	Jeffrey Kern, 39, MO	6:43:25
8	Tanner Thurman, 29, KS	6:51:25
9	Barrett Langton, 40, CO	7:03:02
10	Chris Martin, 43, KS	7:07:57
11	Julle Hromadka, 30, OK	7:08:19
12	Devin Nelson, 31, KS	7:10:56
13	Kyle Rowl, 33, KS	7:17:31
14	Jonathan Piliand, 35, CO	7:24:21
15	Elijah Vineyard, 36, MO	8:02:59
16	Steven Schiavoni, 36, KS	8:05:39
17	Stephanie Cundith, 47, KS	8:12:03
18	Steve Siegele, 61, KS	8:12:13
19	Kyle Dehn, 35, KS	8:33:17
20	Andy Bowman, 59, KS	8:35:41
21	Stefanie Bieberle, 37, KS	8:36:37
22	Joshua Watson, 44, KS	8:44:08
23	Jerry Elmore, 41, KS	8:50:51
24	Elizabeth Martinko, 38, MO	8:54:04
25	Angela Stewart, 41, AR	8:58:38
26	Matt Obrien, 39, KS	9:00:23
27	Jonathan Goff, 34, MO	9:03:03
28	Catherine Clifford, 40, NE	9:04:31
29	Audry Pulley, 38, KS	9:07:15
30	Marc Doherty, 48, KS	9:09:50
31	Ed West, 55, KS	9:25:32
32	Kristin Dagna, 29, LA	9:28:52
33	Justin Combs, 51, KS	9:31:09
34	Dave Meeth, 59, KS	9:32:26
35	Krystal Brown, 57, OK	9:39:37
36	Christian Pinkas-Fanning, 29, MO	9:43:45
37	Dan Lister, 31, KS	9:45:43
38	Dennis Haig, 62, KS	9:50:31
39	Craig Wurth, 50, KS	10:00:13
40	Bob Dwenger, 64, IN	10:00:15
41	George Alexion, 63, ME	10:04:22
42	Matthew Askren, 36, GA	10:04:35
43	Stephen La Row, 43, KS	10:04:57
44	Dustin Trout, 38, KS	10:38:51
45	Thomas Rogers, 42, KS	10:51:03
46	Kevin Paladino, 54, TX	11:27:55
47	Rhodora Bray, 71, OK	14:36:50

*See page 42 for key



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