



BREAKTHROUGH ON THE TRAILS

BY MARY ANN FREVERT, CO-RD

NIGHT HAWK 50K LAWRENCE, KS // JUNE 28

Elevation gain:
1,845 feet

This race is a three-loop course (10.3-mile loops) with each loop consisting of mostly rugged trails through the trees.

The start of the 50k and 20-mile distance with Derek Taussig (far left, front) going on to first-place overall in the 50k, while Brien Arnold (center, front) jumps out in front in the 20-mile distance.

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PHOTOGRAPHY

THE 10TH YEAR

of the Lawrence Trail Hawks' Night Hawk 50k trail race ended with much success. The 50k distance consists of three 10.3-mile loops on rough, rocky terrain with a little bit of elevation. We saw many new faces toeing the line this year, along with many of our seasoned Night Hawk runners.

While the temps weren't particularly hot, it was reported to be very sultry on the trails. Most runners are not used to starting a race at 8 p.m. and running through the night. When you factor in heat, humidity, darkness and a lot of copperhead snakes on technical trails, it can get a bit dicey for runners who don't usually stay up all night, have to manage their fuel and electrolytes to counter the conditions and don't typically train to jump over copperhead snakes (or find them curled up next to their drop bags). Most often, Night Hawk runners say they struggle with how and what to eat during the day prior to the nighttime start.



Shari Hicks and I have been the race directors for the Night Hawk since it began in 2015. Through 10 years and countless mistakes, we now have what we feel is a smooth-running operation. We have dealt with most types of weather that are typical in a Kansas summer as well as heat-related illnesses, bumps, bruises and cuts from the terrain. The volunteer work we do each year has been hard and time-consuming, but it has been very rewarding.

In recent years, when we are in the heat of race prep, I vow that it will be my last year as race director. However, when that last runner crosses the finish line each year, my heart is full. I love handing out the finisher swag to each and every runner and learning about their struggles and accomplishments. For some, it's their first trail race, their first night race or their first time running an ultra distance. However, for others, they are overcoming a life event from things like recent open-heart surgery, beating or battling cancer, recovering

from a severe accident that almost took their life or losing a loved one.

It is there, in the middle of the night or the wee hours of the morning, that I respect the battles many of our runners are dealing with outside of the race. For many, the race symbolizes a breakthrough in a battle that is being fought and won not only on the trail, but in life. The trail running community is so supportive and inclusive, and that is what keeps bringing us all back – whether it is to run, volunteer or race direct.

This year saw 26 finishers in the 50k, 17 finishers in the 20-mile, and 62 finishers in the 10-mile distance. Topping the 50k distance for the men were Derek Taussig in 5:05:15, Jeremiah Nemechek in 5:49:23 and Nathan Cowley in 6:33:02. In the women's division, it was Emily Roe in 6:19:16, Abigail Kroll in 7:26:30 and Kylee Polok in 8:06:34. ▲



LEFT: Co-race directors Mary Ann Frevert (left) and Shari Hicks (right) mark the end of another successful Night Hawk 50k.

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OPPOSITE: Christian Pinkas-Fanning welcomed a smooth section of the trail early in the race.

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Night Hawk

Lawrence, KS // June 28

2,3 // 50K

1	Derek Taussig, 40, KS	5:05:15
2	Jeremiah Nemecek, 38, KS	5:49:23
3	Emily Roe, 31, IA	6:19:16
4	Nathan Cowley, 45, NE	6:33:02
5	Lucas Filer, 25, MO	6:33:41
6	Eric Hunt, 49, KS	7:04:43
7	Stephen Foster, 30, KS	7:11:44
8	Moses Minor, 15, KS	7:14:03
9	Abigail Kroll, 42, KS	7:26:30
9	Barrett Kroll, 43, KS	7:26:30
11	Taylor Mendez Bauer, 34, KS	7:47:13
12	Diego Pinkas, 31, MO	7:55:45
12	Christian Pinkas-Fanning, 32, MO	7:55:45
14	Randall Dolan, 38, KS	8:02:54
15	Truman Ellison, 16, KS	8:06:29
16	Kylee Polok, 46, KS	8:06:34
17	Carlos Prado, 28, KS	8:07:26
18	Chad Webb, 44, KS	8:48:09
18	Mason Barber, 26, KS	8:48:09
20	Derek Johnson, 32, MO	9:03:45
21	Jason Scott, 41, MO	9:03:49
22	Justin Braun, 32, KS	9:06:00
23	Braden Lockwood, 24, KS	9:08:41
24	Camron Hull, 39, MO	9:17:57
25	James Lakenan, 35, MO	9:28:00
26	James Dawe, 26, MO	9:28:01

*See page 67 for key

RIGHT: Abigail Kroll leads Barrett Kroll on the second 10-mile loop, before finishing second-place female in the 50k.

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BELOW: Randall Dolan reacts to the heat, humidity and the demanding conditions on the trails while Albert Mauro Jr. (front) helps refill his bottle.

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