

# 'DIRTY BIRD'

## 9M & 18M Trail Races

**Sun, Dec 15, 2024 -10 AM-French Creek State Park, Birdsboro, PA**

**Online registration ONLY so that we have a central source of emails to use for contacting people in the case of a postponement due to weather**

There are 49 synchronized divers in the world, down from 50 after 1 Olympian cracked his head open on the board like an over-ripe melon (should have shown THAT on TV; WHAT a RATINGS BOOST!). Show me a person who has seen a live synchronized swimming contest (other than at the Olympics) and I'll show you someone too cheap to pay for Cable. At last count, there were exactly 7 breakdancers in the world that had full time jobs. On the other hand, there are millions of people that compete each year in XC or trail races. And all of the western hemisphere and most of Asia goes nuts over baseball. So, guess which 2 of these sports were NOT in the just completed Olympics??!! HOW COULD THAT BE??? You might be asking the same thing about how a Thanksgiving-themed race could end up in the middle of Dec? Well, several years ago, our lawmakers decided that PA state parks should allow people to come in and kill Bambi on the Sunday of Thanksgiving weekend. So, we were forced to move the race back to the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Dec. **EXCEPT THIS year, the first Sunday in Dec happens to BE the Sunday of Thanksgiving weekend.** No problem; move it back to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday. NO CAN DO, 'cause our local running club holds their Shiver by the River winter series on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Dec thru March and we would NEVER do anything to hurt a Pagoda Pacers race, especially since the founder of Pretzel City CREATED that race 34 years ago. So, we've moved the race back to the THIRD Sunday in Dec which means there will be a lot less belches on the course that smell like sweet potatoes. This jaunt is a late Fall favorite in the trail running community; often getting 250 - 400 runners to frolic thru the rustic trails and past the two beautiful lakes in French Creek State Park. And for good reason! In addition to the course being scenic and the race support being top-notch, this race gives you OPTIONS!! Everyone starts together and runs the 9 Mile course. Able to start a 2<sup>nd</sup> loop before the 2 hr mark? Go for 2 loops; 18 miles! Had more trouble finishing the 1<sup>st</sup> loop than you did finishing your 4<sup>th</sup> helping of green bean casserole on Thanksgiving? Finish in the 9 Miler instead. Each lap has 2 aide stops, 2 slightly steep climbs and a short section of road at the start so you can get your positioning before entering single track. There are rocks, roots, leaves and downed branches throughout; it is a RUSTIC trail run. There are also 2 short and 1 longer section of dirt road in each lap but TONS of single & double track. Primarily uses the Six Penny Loop trail. SCENIC & VERY runnable. **NOTE: YOU ALONE ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR WELFARE DURING THIS RACE.** Jostle a joint during the race? Drag it (and the rest of you) to an aide station so we can drive you back rather than carry you. Get lost?? You WON'T but if you do, don't call us for help "cause cell service SUCKS in the park; again, get to a road, flag down someone and ask for either directions or a ride. Since this race requires a certain degree of common sense/semi-maturity (unless you are directing it) and since we do not look for lost runners, we discourage (but do not forbid) those under 16 from entering. Other discouraged from coming are anyone who can name a song from "Bring It On; The Musical", people waiting for a plant-based bacon that actually TASTES like bacon and anyone who treat ANY Dallas Cowboy fan with ANYTHING other than unbridled disdain! BTW, the Eagles are at home that day but don't play till 4:25. So, you have NO excuse!

**Mandatory Online registration at**

**<https://www.pretzelcitysports.com/online-registration>**

Open until midnight on the Wed of race week. Nominal service fee applies.

**ENTRY/FEE:** Race starts at 10 A.M.; registration in parking lot back behind the pool & Hopewell Lake; from 9 a.m. to 9:50. Fee of \$40 WITH a long sleeve cotton shirt OR \$35 WITHOUT a shirt, if entered by Mon, Dec 2. Afterwards, including raceday, \$45 WITH shirt and \$40 with NO shirt or when they run out. (VERY limited number of extra shirts will be printed so if you don't want to be shut out of a shirt, pre-enter even if it's after the cutoff date! Sizes offered: S, M, L, XL & 2X) Cash or check only on raceday; VERY little internet or cell connection in park so no credit cards. No mailing of shirts or awards; no refunds. Rain or shine; (may delay race start if "lightening"). Minimum age of 16 suggested if running the 9 miler, NO one under 18 is allowed in the 18 miler. Racing with a pet IS permitted IF you stay toward the back for the first ¼ mile or so and it ISN'T a ferret, goldfish, dachshund (or any other very shorted legged dog), etc. MUST be on a VERY short leash at all times, unless its name is Earnie. **NOTE: MANY OF OUR SIGN-IN STAFF ALSO HELP AT REMOTE SPOTS ON THE COURSE. TO GET THEM OUT THERE ON TIME, IT'S CRUCIAL THAT RUNNERS BE REGISTERED BY 9:50!!**

**GOODIES:** Instant results, lots of awards, results on [pretzelcitysports.com](http://pretzelcitysports.com) the next business day, WELL marked course if no one screws with it, clean porta potties, loads of parking convenient to the registration area, 2 water stops, decent grub, course viewable at several points via car or bike, camping/cabins in park (610-582-9680) Playground nearby. Lots of goodies afterwards with the possibility of hot soup; not confirmed yet. NO LEFTOVER TURKEY, CRANBERRY SAUCE, STUFFING, FRUIT CAKE, ETC WILL BE SERVED HERE.

**IMPORTANT NOTE # 1:** While Pretzel City LOVES running in SUSPECT weather, things may get so bad that the Park stops us from having the race that day; roads closed by state, hail the size of gerbils, escaped axe murderer on the course, etc. DON'T confuse "bad" conditions with "normal" snowfall (before or during the event), shrinkage-causing temps, slow but still drive-able roads, etc.; we race in ALL of those cases!!! Race to be postponed **ONLY** in extreme cases. In this HIGHLY UNLIKELY case, a message will be put on the home page of [www.pretzelcitysports.com](http://www.pretzelcitysports.com) as soon as we make the call. Our regrets in advance to those that gets "burnt" from driving in the night before but PCS won't "control" this; the Park staff will. **IF POSTPONED, THE NEW DATE IS THE FOLLOWING SUNDAY! SAME TIME AND PLACE.**

**IMPORTANT NOTE # 2:** PCS shares the Park staff's desire to limit the long-term impact of any race on its trails. If the trail conditions & weather that weekend require us to do so, we reserve the right to adjust the course, its distance and/or its "percent of trails versus road" to ensure that the trails will not be damaged.

**AWARDS:** 1<sup>ST</sup> & 2<sup>ND</sup> M & F overall for both races plus the following"

15k: 0-39: 7M, 7F 40-49: 6M, 6F 50-59: 5M, 5F 60-69: 5M, 4F 70+: 3M, 2F  
30k: 0-39: 4M, 4F 40-49: 3M, 3F 50-59: 3M, 3F 60 +: 3M, 3F

**Clydesdales: Top 3 M and F Clydes in 15k, Top 3 Clydes regardless of gender in 30k, Clydesdale Qualifying Weight:** Men: minimum of 210 lbs. or 185 if 5 ft., 9 inches tall or less. Women: minimum of 160 lbs., 140 if 5 ft., 4 inches tall or less. Honor system; bulk up during Thanksgiving if necessary!

**Park Address for GPS'ers:** Use 843 Park Rd, Elverson, PA 19520 Print out the directions in advance if you can; like we said, both cell service and internet service sucks in the park.

**Dirtiest Bird: Ron Horn, [rhornpcs@aol.com](mailto:rhornpcs@aol.com) (preferred means of contact) or 610-779-2668 day or night (just not during an Eagles game), [www.pretzelcitysports.com](http://www.pretzelcitysports.com)**

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