

2026 Women's Distance Festival 5K Runner's Guide

General Information

Date: Sunday, May 17, 2026
Time: 8:00am
Distance: 5K
Location: Howard Community College
10600 Hickory Ridge Road
Columbia, MD 21044

Packet Pickup

Date	Time	Location
RACE DAY ONLY	6:30am-7:30am	HCC campus Lot H

Pre-Race

Porta-pots will be available in Lot H. See Start/Finish Layout.

A warm-up, led by Audrey McKay of TrueSports Physical Therapy, will be held at 7:30am sharp in Lot H.

The race will start on time at 8:00am. Please be in the start corral at least 5 minutes before the race start. We will not delay the start.

Hickory Ridge Road will be closed by Howard County Police at 7:30am. If you arrive late, enter HCC campus via Little Patuxent Parkway.

There will be no access to any buildings on race day. Do not attempt to enter any buildings.

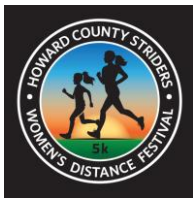
No earbuds, strollers, or pets allowed on the course. Adaptive racing equipment is exempt.

Parking

Lots F & G are available for runner and spectator parking. Lots F & G are across Campus Drive from Lot H, where the start/finish line is located. See Start/Finish Layout.

Course

The course laps around the Hickory Ridge neighborhood. The start line is at the crosswalk at the entrance of Lot H as you enter from Campus Drive. Course marshals with yellow vests and flags will also provide direction to runners. Runners will run "clock-wise" in the loop and finish in Lot H off Campus Drive. See course map.



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Walkers

Per our agreement with the Howard County Police Department, the police will provide traffic control for runners for a set period (until 9:00am). Once the police open the course to traffic, walkers are expected to move to the sidewalk and obey the rules of the road when crossing intersections. **The timing mats and finish line chute will remain open to score all participants finishing within 90 minutes of the gun start.**

Walkers who fail to move onto the sidewalk or follow the rules of the road may be DISQUALIFIED.

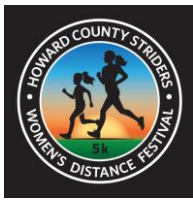
On Course Aid Station

There will be one aid station on the course around the halfway point, at the intersection of Owen Brown Road and Jerry's Drive. Runners are encouraged to carry their own bottle.

Awards

Awards will be given to the following categories:

- Overall 1st, 2nd and 3rd
- Overall Masters 1st only
- Overall Grand Masters 1st only
- Top 3 in Age Groups
 - Under 9
 - 10-19
 - 20-29
 - 30-39
 - 40-49
 - 50-59
 - 60-69
 - 70-79
 - 80+
- Mother and Daughter Teams 1st, 2nd and 3rd
 - Daughter 13 and Under
 - Daughter 14-20
 - Daughter Over 21



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Race Premium

Finishers of this year's WDF 5K will receive a Birdie 3.0 personal alarm device in matcha green, adorned with the WDF logo.

The Birdie 3.0 personal safety alarm is specifically designed for women by women, boasting a powerful sound when activated. Its USB rechargeable feature ensures it's always ready for use, providing a sense of safety for everyday life.

Virtual participants will receive instructions on how to claim their premium after submitting their results through RunSignUp.



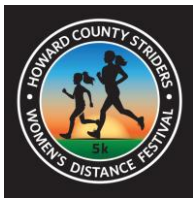
Post-Race Celebration and Awards Ceremony

The awards ceremony will be held after the race around 9:15am. This year, we will have cash awards for all winners thanks to a generous donation from She's Birdie. If you believe that you have won an overall, age group, or team award, please stay on-site after you finish to claim your award. There will be no "double dipping" and participants are only eligible for one award.

There will be post-race snacks and fruit, as well as water and electrolyte drink bottles at the finish. All participants will be entered into a raffle for a free pair of Brooks running shoes courtesy of Feet First Sports.

We will also have vendors to support participants, including:

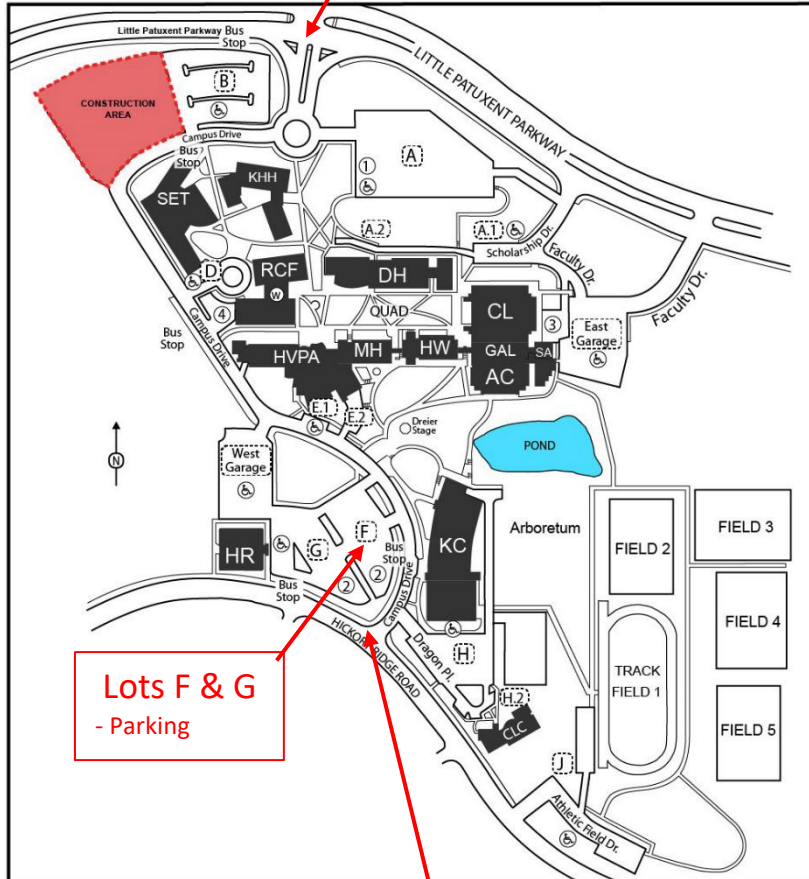
- **TrueSports PT** – will provide injury screenings and answer general questions about training and physical therapy
- **Living Wellness Chiropractic of Columbia** – will provide massages for runners
- **UpperCut Coffee** – will provide coffee samples and 12 oz bags of coffee for sale through their Brewing Up Fitness program, which supports the Howard County Striders with every purchase.



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HCC Campus Map

Enter campus via Little Patuxent Parkway after 7:30am.



Lots F & G
- Parking

Revised 04/04/25

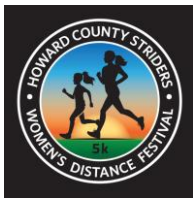
Hickory Ridge Road will be closed between 7:30-7:45am.
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Start/Finish Layout





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RACE SPONSORS

Thank you to our generous sponsors for supporting our participants on race day

she's birdie 

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