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CANADIAN Running

Harvard physics professor destroys transamerica speed record

Jenny Hoffman ran from San Francisco to New York in 47 days, 12 hours and 35 minutes, taking more than a week off the record



Photo by: Jenny Hoffman

KEELEY MILNE NOVEMBER 9, 2023

Harvard physics professor **Jenny Hoffman** just crushed the cross trans-american speed record, running from San Francisco to New York in 47 days, 12 hours and 35 seconds, more than a week under the previous record (54d 16h 24m, set by **Sandra Villines** in 2017).

Cambridge, Mass. based Hoffman, 45, kicked off her nearly 3,000-mile (4,828 km) run in September, aiming to average just over 60 miles (100 km) per day. Hoffman had her sights set on the trans-american record and the women's [transcontinental](#) Guinness World Record. Pending verification, she's nailed those goals with time to spare.

The Trans American FKT (fastest known time) has a long and storied history. Before Villines broke the women's record (by more than two weeks), it had not budged since 1978, with South African runner **Mavis Hutchinson** claiming a record 69d 2h 40m. Ultrarunner (and friend to Hoffman) [Pete Kostelnick](#) holds the men's record of 42d 6h 30m, set in 2016.

"This morning I walked from New York City Hall to the Atlantic Ocean at Coney Island," Hoffman posted on Strava on Friday. "My daughter and I took off our shoes and waded in. Total mileage from sea to shining sea is 3,048 miles."

Hoffman rowed on the varsity crew team as an undergraduate student at Harvard, and began to run marathons in her senior year. From there she progressed to triathlons and ultras. She won the national title in the USA Track and Field National Championship [24-hour run](#) in 2014, 2015 and 2016, and was selected as the USATF athlete of the week in Sept. 2016. She also competed on the gold medal-winning team at the IAU 24-Hour world championships in Belfast in 2017.

The runner's accomplishment is a redemption of sorts: she also made an attempt at securing the trans-america record in 2019, before ending her run prematurely in Cleveland, Ohio, after she injured her knee. In that attempt, Hoffman ran 2,560 miles in 42 days, averaging 61 miles per day (six days under world record pace). "Through surgery and rehab and pandemic and work and family life, I have dreamed *every single day* for 4 years about redoing and completing this run," Hoffman wrote on her blog.

Hoffman shared parts of her journey on her blog, titled [Run, Jenny, Run](#)—a nod to the fictional **Forrest Gump** and its main character, who also made a cross-country run. Her run was also documented on the FKT website, and she shared a daily journal on Strava.

“It’s a beautiful country filled with beautiful people,” Hoffman said post-run.
“God Bless America.”

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Day 1 (Sep 16): So grateful for Bob, Kathy, Ben, Lyla, Rory, Mira, Avni, Cyndi who noticed my late Friday post about the reroute and came out to meet me at the last minute! And grateful for my all-start crew who drove until 1am Friday to make this happen.

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